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*Charles Edward Jerningham*





VICTOR EMMANUEL II.

FIRST VOLUME

Godkin

1877

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LIFE OF  
VICTOR EMMANUEL II.

FIRST KING OF ITALY

BY

G. S. GODKIN

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

London  
MACMILLAN AND CO.

1879 *W*

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## P R E F A C E.

MANY MEMOIRS have been written of Victor Emmanuel since his death, but none of them would answer for the purpose of translating into our language. The best work on the subject is one lately issued from the press, entitled '*La Vita ed il Regno di Vittorio Emanuele*,' by Signor Massari, and to it I am much indebted in the composition of this work. It is full of reliable information, and ably written; but too comprehensive and diffuse for English readers, who cannot be supposed to take the same interest in all the particulars of contemporary events in Italy as the natives of the country.

Ghiron's brief Memoir is charming as far as it goes, but it does not pretend to be a regular biography. And the author is a true hero-worshipper; he is on his knees at the opening sentence, and never rises from that reverential attitude to the close of the book.

But it is hardly reasonable to expect at the present

moment an impartial work on the subject from an Italian, any more than it would be to look for an impartial biography from a son of a loved father whom he had just laid in the grave. While the heart of the nation was still vibrating with a sorrowful emotion, some writers felt impelled to vent their excited feelings in eulogistic Memoirs of the deceased; and at the same time the Papal party let loose a flood of foul invective—not so much in the press, for fear of popular indignation, as by private means and verbal reports, sent floating through society—particularly foreign society—in Italy.

I confess that I have been partly induced to undertake a Life of the Honest King, in whose career England has always taken a warm interest, by observing how English and American travellers, who do not read Italian books, and who see only the surface of things, receive as undoubted facts every false report set on foot by the malignity of a party whose defeat naturally renders them bitter.

Victor Emmanuel, from the day he succeeded his father on the field of Novara, distinguished himself by a rectitude of purpose, so strikingly at variance with the conduct of the other Italian princes, that his subjects

dubbed him *Rè Galantuomo*—a title soon endorsed by the rest of Europe.

How did the Honest King *par excellence*, who would have resigned every foot of ground he possessed rather than break his word to his people, ever merit the title—equally widespread in the Catholic world—of Robber King? There may be difference of opinion with regard to a man's appearance, manners, or abilities; but surely there ought to be but one with regard to his honesty. Can black ever be white, or white black? Can a man be an honest, a remarkably honest man, and a robber, a very great robber? He can, and is so, in the sincere opinion of those who so designate him. It all depends on the sort of spectacles through which he is regarded. I have tried to look through both spectacles with as fair an eye as possible. If I have seen unreal distorted visions through one, which vanish or change their character on investigation, I may be pardoned for preferring the glass which in the main is true, though given overmuch to beautify the object under consideration.

I believe that a perfectly impartial biography is an extremely difficult, almost impossible, thing to find. The sympathy which a writer naturally feels, and ought to feel, for his subject, is apt to increase as he studies his life in

all its bearings, and his motives of action. To be on his guard against this sympathy, and not let it bias his judgment, is the duty of the conscientious biographer. I have tried, in this simple record of facts, to do justice to the memory of Victor Emmanuel, without doing injustice to the opposing party.

G. S. GODKIN.

SIENA : *December 19, 1878.*

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## INTRODUCTION.

'ITALY' is one sole nation : the unity of customs, of language, of literature—in some future, more or less distant—will unite all its inhabitants under one sole government. . . . Rome is undoubtedly the capital which one day the Italians will select. . . . It is necessary to the happiness of Europe that Italy should form one sole State which will maintain the equilibrium on the Continent between France and Austria, and on the sea between France and England.'

The man who on a desert rock thus meditated on the destinies of nations, says the historian La Farina, 'was not a poet guided by imagination and sentiment ; not a solitary philosopher, little practised in human affairs ; he was a man who had learned by experience how empires are made and unmade—who had studied peoples, observing them from the most humble grades in society and from the loftiest throne that for ten centuries had ever been supported in Europe ; who had experienced victories and defeats, who had overrun the world as master—from the arid deserts of Egypt, to the snowy plains of Russia.'

While the idea of Italian unity was thus working in Napoleon's brain, Italy was sunk in abject slavery under a host of petty tyrants, who, overawed and supported by Austria, dared not, if they would, institute any reforms in their respective governments. All the sovereigns without exception were despots pure and simple—their subjects at the mercy of their good or bad impulses, or the suggestions of their ghostly advisers. The rulers were divided into two classes : those



conscienceless princes to whom the possession of a throne only means superior facilities of enjoyment ; and those whose consciences were in the keeping of the Jesuit Fathers, and who carried out their views in the administration of State affairs. It would be difficult to say under which of these *régimes* the community suffered most.

When a people were permitted to live in peace without any intolerable exactions or injustices, as in Tuscany and Piedmont, it was the effect of the sovereign's goodness, and he was much praised for abstaining from harassing his subjects by imprisonments, confiscations, tortures. And where, as in the Romagna, Naples, Parma, Modena, and Lucca, the princes indulged in rapacity, cruelty, and caprice, their subjects had no remedy but hopeless rebellion ; for these petty tyrants were supported by the great military power of Austria, which not only ruled Lombardy and Venetia with a rod of iron, but prevented any change of government in the other States.

In Piedmont there reigned Victor Emmanuel I.—good, honourable, and brave, but wedded to the past, and much under priestly influence ; consequently opposed to any reforms, even to a mitigation of the barbarous laws which his humanity rarely allowed to be carried out to the letter. His cousin, Charles Albert, Prince of Carignano-Savoy, heir presumptive to the throne, was known to have liberal sympathies, hated Austria, and was hated by the Austrians, who wished to break the Salic law, hitherto in force in Sardinia, and cut him off from the inheritance, in order to give the crown to the Duke of Modena, in virtue of his connection by marriage with the House of Savoy.

Francis IV., Duke of Modena, was a Bourbon prince, with all the vices of his race, and perhaps an extra grain of savage cruelty. The prisons of Modena in his reign were worthy of the days of the Borgias. The loathsome dungeons in which the unhappy Liberals languished without a trial were not the worst infliction. They were drugged so as to produce delirium just before they were brought out to be examined, and every-

thing they said in this state was noted down and used against them. An officer died of an over-dose of the poison ; and a barrister went violently mad, and had to be chained to prevent him killing himself ; while countless numbers of the most intelligent, high-minded, and well-disposed citizens perished on the scaffold, or endured the prolonged martyrdom of the galleys, without any positive evidence against them. This ferocious prince spared neither sex nor age ; and not even the sacred office of priesthood could protect the unhappy man, no matter what his virtues, who was once suspected of Liberalism. One instance will serve to show the sort of justice that was then administered in Modena. Two prisoners were sentenced to die on the same day—the one for the murder of his father ; the other, a priest, accused of Liberalism, a man of great talent, and such excellent character that he was universally beloved and respected. The parricide received the sovereign grace ; while the good priest was pitilessly sent to the block, though his bishop begged on his knees for his life to be spared, and refused to *unpriest* the condemned, which was necessary before the sentence could be executed. Another less scrupulous bishop was found to perform the office, and the victim died with the calm resignation of a Christian. The clergy were almost always on the side of despotism, and were the chief supporters and instigators of every act of tyranny perpetrated throughout the peninsula. But there were not wanting noble exceptions ; every State in Italy counts some reverend names among its martyrs of liberty, and with them must be numbered this poor Andreoli di Correggio.

In Parma the Austrian Duchess, Maria Luisa, acting in obedience to orders from Vienna and her Jesuit advisers, pursued the same course, persecuting with unrelenting animosity all enlightened thought, as tending towards disaffection.

Passing over the Duchy of Tuscany, which enjoyed a mild rule under the house of Lorraine—except when, occasionally bullied and threatened by Austria, the Grand Duke was forced

into some act of severity, such as surrendering a political refugee to a neighbouring government—we come to the vast and fertile provinces stretching across Central Italy from the Mediterranean to the Adriatic. These were under the Pope's sway, and were in as miserable a condition as a government founded on corruption, and nurtured in abuses, could make them. Pius VII. was personally a respectable character, with a reputation for learning; and he was undoubtedly an encourager of art. But he was never capable of governing the Papal States with any efficiency, and his great age left him in a state of ineptitude for years before his death.

It is anticipating the narrative somewhat to mention his successor Leo XII., who ascended the Papal throne 1823; but, as we are now taking a general glance at the state of the peninsula in our hero's infancy, we may as well here give a few brief words to describe the most remarkable and powerful enemy to progress that Italy had then to struggle against.

Pope Leo appeared to be in a hopeless state of health at the time of his election, and it was confidently believed that he would not survive many months. But, like Richelieu, the possession of power had a revivifying effect on him, and the new Pontiff began to display extraordinary energy as soon as the tiara was on his brow. He was a ferocious fanatic, whose object was to destroy all the improvements of modern times, and force society back to the government, customs, and ideas of mediæval days. In his insensate rage against progress he stopped vaccination for small-pox—a disease which devastated the Roman provinces during his reign, along with many other curses which his brutal ignorance and misgovernment brought upon the inhabitants of those beautiful and fertile regions. He curtailed the old privileges of the municipalities, granted new privileges to the religious communities, and enlarged the power of the clergy to the extent that bishops and cardinals had the power of life and death in their hands. He set the Inquisition to work with new vigour; and though torture had been nomi-

nally abolished in 1815, new kinds of torment were invented, quite as effectual as the cord, the thumbscrew, and the rack of old times. He renewed the persecutions of the Jews ; drove them back into the *Ghetto* from whence they had begun to emerge, rebuilt its walls, and had them locked in at night like wild beasts ; and issued an edict ordering all Israelites to sell their goods within a given time on pain of confiscation. On the first day of the Carnival they were obliged to come in a deputation to the Capitol, kneel at the foot of the throne of the Senator of Rome, and petition to be let live. The Senator made a motion of his foot as if to spurn them, with the words : ' Go ; for this year we will tolerate you.'

The Christians fared little better ; to use a vulgar but expressive phrase, they literally 'could not call their souls their own.' The Pope put all educational establishments into the hands of the Jesuits, and no other means of instruction were permitted to his Holiness's subjects. He instituted a system of espionage by which he could be accurately informed of the private sins of the people, and punish them as crimes against the State. Whoever did not observe the fasts of the Church, or neglected to attend religious service on prescribed days, or failed to confess once a month—the confessors being appointed by government—or committed any offence against morality, was subject to whatever castigation the bishop or the Holy Office of the Inquisition chose to inflict. One instance will serve to show the severity of those sentences. One of the Noble Guards was accused of a misdemeanour with a woman of light fame ; without a trial he was deprived of his rank, and ordered to be imprisoned for seven years. At the same time the clergy, whose good example might have done more than these harsh laws to reform the morals of the laity, were leading scandalous lives ; but no one dared accuse *them*. And the real felons who preyed upon society escaped with impunity by bribing the officers of justice. Brigandage was rife throughout the States of the Church, and it was in this reign that the

famous chiefs De Cesaris and Gasparone flourished. At the head of a numerous following of malefactors they fortified themselves in the wooded mountains, making raids on the neighbouring towns and villages, committing indescribable outrages on the inhabitants, and sparing neither convents, schools, nor monasteries. The fear and horror that reigned in those neighbourhoods induced the unfortunate citizens to supplicate the Pope to put a stop to the infliction. But the Papal Government, strong to persecute, was powerless to protect. It had resort to such means as the princes of the Saxon Heptarchy tried in order to extirpate wolves from Britain ; that is, it offered a reward for a certain number of brigands' heads. It is unnecessary to point out the incentive given to crime and treachery by this irregular mode of executing justice. The system which answered very well for wild beasts could not be applied with equal success to men, inasmuch as a wolf's head could not be mistaken for anything but a wolf's head ; but who could tell whether a human head had belonged to a brigand or an honest man? The cardinal sent by the Pope to find a remedy for these ills became infected himself with the spirit of brigandage, and was discovered in such nefarious practices that Leo hastily recalled and sent him into retirement, despatching another in his stead. This prelate opened negotiations with the bandit chief, with the view of coming to terms. After long discussion, the preliminaries of a treaty of peace were agreed upon, and the brigands capitulated on honourable conditions ; that is, life, liberty, and a pension. While these abandoned criminals were set free of all punishment, honest, brave men were dying on the gibbet, or languishing in the dungeons of the Inquisition. The papal legates who ruled the provinces were worthy representatives of their sovereign ; particularly Cardinal Rivarola in Ravenna, who decimated the surrounding country of its most intelligent and virtuous inhabitants. In one month, August 1825, the following condemnations—nearly all capital—were passed in Ravenna, all for the offence of Liberalism :—Thirty'

nobles, one hundred and fifty farmers and shopkeepers, two priests, seventy-four *employés*, thirty-eight military men, seventy-two doctors, lawyers, and men of letters, and many artisans. As may be imagined, a brief experience of this rule embittered the spirit of the Liberal party, who threw themselves without reserve into the ranks of the secret societies, and planned acts of desperate revenge. Many attempts were made on the life of Cardinal Rivarola, who at last had to fly Ravenna, and was succeeded by another, as bad if not worse. The prisons could not hold all the accused ; and they had to be crammed into monasteries and such-like edifices, where they were secretly examined, condemned, and sent where their relatives might never know what had become of them.

The famous Society, or, as the Italians call it, *Sect*, of the Carbonari, which had been introduced into Naples some time before, was now spreading northwards, and gaining importance and influence, as the tyranny of the governments hardened and embittered the populations. The Carbonari now counted amongst their numbers scions of the oldest families in Italy, and some of the noblest and most single-minded men that any country ever produced, who, under more favourable circumstances, would have been useful and honoured members of society. It was, however, composed for the most part of the sons of the people. The word *Carbonaro*, coal-man, signifies that its founder was a man of humble rank ; and it continued to have the character of a very democratic institution, in spite of the admixture of noble blood which by degrees had been infused into it. The middle classes supplied large numbers to the society, and the professional men who belonged to it were not few. It is unnecessary to say that there were attached to this as to all such combinations a goodly number of worthless characters ; self-seeking adventurers who made a trade of politics ; light-minded, erratic youths who wanted the excitement and importance attaching to the character of *conspirator* ; vain and unprincipled ones, who loved to hear themselves holding

forth on the subject of Liberty, and were ready for any deed that would bring them notoriety.

This faction had ramifications in all parts of Italy, but it took deeper root in the Papal States than elsewhere—the natural result of persecution. For every member immolated by the Holy Office seven sprang into existence, more fierce and reckless than he, more determined on revenge. To assassinate a tyrant became an act of sublime public virtue in their eyes, and the perpetrator was regarded as a magnanimous hero, a modern Brutus.

Many suffered, however, who were innocent of any offence against the law, and who died professing the Christian faith, but protesting against its unworthy ministers. One of these, going to the scaffold, was exhorted by his confessor to reconcile himself to the Pope, ‘Christ’s minister on earth ;’ to which he replied, ‘It is a long time since Christ has had any ministers on earth, and certainly he is none such who has transformed himself into an executioner.’ He kissed the crucifix and exclaimed, ‘Lord, save me, and I shall be safe !’

The Papal Government being unable to cope with the Carbonari, a counter-secret society was instituted, in order to overcome them by espionage. The members called themselves Sanfedisti, Holy Faithists. The following initiatory oath will sufficiently explain the object of this combination :—

*Sanfedist Oath.*

‘In the presence of Omnipotent God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, of Mary, Immaculate Virgin, of all the celestial host, and of thee, my honoured father, I swear to let my right hand be cut off, or my throat be cut, to die of hunger, or perish in the midst of terrible torture, and I pray the Lord God to condemn me to eternal pains, sooner than I should betray one of the honoured fathers or brothers of the Catholic Apostolic Society, to which in this moment I subscribe myself, and if I do not scrupulously obey its laws and assist my brothers in need. I swear firmly to

maintain and defend the holy cause I have embraced, and to spare no individual appertaining to the infamous sect of Liberals, whatever be his birth, parentage, or fortune ; to have no pity either on children or old men, and to shed the last drop of the Liberals' blood without regard to sex or rank. I swear, in short, implacable hatred to the enemies of our holy Roman Catholic and only true religion.'

The oath was taken, kneeling, upon the Eucharist, and a blessed dagger was put into the hand of the neophyte.<sup>1</sup>

Adjoining the States of the Church was the kingdom of Naples, under the Bourbon sway. Ferdinand I. had already been driven from his kingdom by the aid of French arms, when he was reseatd on the throne by the English, who compelled him to restore the ancient privileges and liberties of which he had deprived Sicily, and institute some reforms in Naples ; but he soon returned to the old *régime* again. He was coarse, illiterate, heartless, and mindless, given up to the grossest pleasures. When his dying brother, who had shown him much kindness, sent repeated messages requesting his presence, he refused to sacrifice a hunting-party or feast with his favourites to gratify the fraternal wish. And while the funeral obsequies were going on, he was revelling with shameless indecency in his favourite amusements. The English minister, having received at this time a royal invitation, replied to the effect that he had to assist at the mournful ceremony of an august funeral, and therefore could not accept it.

In 1820 an outbreak of Carbonarism shook the throne of the Two Sicilies to its foundations. Almost all the population of Naples except the old nobility attached to the Court were Carbonari ; a great part of the army fraternised with the revolutionists, and many priests and monks were seen marching in their ranks. The king and all his family made a virtue of necessity, and pretended to be quite charmed with the novel idea of a Liberal Constitution. They made a great *fête* to celebrate the

<sup>1</sup> See La Farina, *Storia d' Italia*, vol. 1.



event, the princes and princesses standing on a balcony, waving their handkerchiefs to the cries of *Viva il Rè e la Costituzione*, and showering tricoloured cockades amongst the people. The hoary king walked at the head of a procession to church, and, taking his place at the altar with his hand on the Bible, swore to maintain the Constitution, invoking the Deity to strike him that moment with a thunderbolt if he spoke falsely. His sons also swore, and kept the oath in the same manner as their sire.

Soon after this he fled to Laybach, at the invitation of the Emperor, and sent an Austrian army to reduce his subjects to submission. When they were utterly crushed, and King Ferdinand *absolute* was proclaimed through the streets, he returned to his capital. We have already described how Carbonarism was punished in the States of the Church and the Duchies of Modena and Parma. We will now return to Piedmont, where all the hopes of the revolutionists began to centre, after the overthrow of the Neapolitan rebels. The King of Sardinia was absolute like all the other princes; but he was Italian, descended from a long line of Italian fathers, while all the others were more or less foreign, and under the influence of Austria to a greater extent than he was. The heir presumptive was well known to be Liberal, and it was hoped that he would take the lead of the national party. The Carbonari *were* national in their aspirations, though they had but a vague plan for the future of their country when all the tyrants should be extinguished. They were not Red Republicans, being quite willing to follow the standard of any hereditary prince who would grant a free constitution, and engage in a war for the expulsion of the Austrians from the peninsula, as it was that Power only which held the petty tyrants on their respective thrones.

The national party in Piedmont felt their hopes of a reform rise when the enlightened and highly cultivated Count Prospero Balbo came into power. But when he proposed some necessary reforms in the administration, he was overborne by the clerical

party and the old nobility, who warned the king to beware of innovations, 'which always brought misfortunes in their train.'

The Spanish revolution and the outbreak in Naples had produced a profound impression in Piedmont ; every class was penetrated with the desire for a reform in the government, though they were all loyal to the House of Savoy. In March 1821 a general rising of the people in Turin simultaneously with one in Alessandria led by the Carbonari, in which the military joined, forced Victor Emmanuel I. to look the question straight in the face. It is probable that he would have yielded to the just desires of his people, and granted the constitution they asked, but for his fatal promise to the Emperor of Austria not to make any change in the existing order of things. He abdicated in favour of his brother, Charles Felix, making Charles Albert regent in the absence of the new king. The regent, who was at the same time loyal and liberal, was much puzzled as to his duty in the trying circumstances in which he was placed. He yielded to the popular demand, proclaimed the Spanish Constitution, adding on his own account an oath of fealty to the new king.

Carlo Felice was a strong upholder of absolute power, and devoted to Austria. He banished his young cousin from the kingdom in return for his fidelity, and visited the revolutionists with the severest punishments. The rebellion of Piedmont had been the result of a concerted plan with the nationalists of other States. The Lombards, particularly, were deeply involved in the conspiracy, and when it fell to the ground the terrible price of the daring attempt had to be paid in blood and tears.

The trials, sentences, and executions were going on at the same time in Lombardy and Piedmont ; and there were few families in either State who were not torn with anxiety and grief, if not for relatives at least for friends who had come under the law, so widespread was the sympathy with the movement in Sardinia, and so deep-rooted in Lombardy the hatred of the Austrian rule.

The Austrian Government was rather more civilised and

enlightened than that of the other States in Italy—that is, as long as there was no suspicion of disaffection towards the Imperial power ; but any offence that came under the head of treason was punished with merciless severity. Everyone has read Silvio Pellico's '*Le Mie Prigioni*;' but perhaps everyone does not know that it is entirely free from exaggeration, that the author was scrupulously truthful in all his statements. Orsini's '*Austrian Prisons*,' published in England and in the English language, shortly before his death, is intensely interesting, and gives a fair idea of the treatment which political prisoners received under the government of Austria. It would seem incredible, if such accounts were not corroborated by hundreds of trustworthy authorities. The acts of gratuitous brutality which Austrian soldiers perpetrated in the discharge of their duty was not the worst infliction which the poor prisoners had to complain of. Horrible calumnies were circulated about them, so as to destroy all sympathy for their fate in the hearts of the people. This, doubtless, was the work of the Jesuits, whose influence was all-powerful at Vienna ; and it was also to them the prisoners owed certain refined cruelties, such as depriving them of a valuable book, or precious *souvenir*, removing the spectacles of those whose sight was defective ; and telling them bad news of their companions in misfortune or of their families. They were deprived of light and air, almost starved, allowed no water to wash themselves, or any appliance of civilisation ; their miserable sleep was interrupted by gaolers who came to conduct them to midnight examinations, presided over by judges who took pleasure in augmenting their unhappy condition. Of the many touching instances of Lombard courage and constancy then displayed we will cite one.

The Count Gonfalonieri, a young enthusiast in the cause of liberty and nationality, was in the thick of the conspiracy, and, after a prolonged and cruel imprisonment, was condemned to death with many other noblemen and gentlemen, among whom

was Silvio Pellico, October 1823. The count's young wife was broken-hearted; during her husband's trial and imprisonment she touched the hearts of the severest Austrian judges by her grief. When the sentence was at last pronounced, she set out for Vienna, accompanied by her husband's father and brother, to plead his cause at the feet of the emperor. They all threw themselves on their knees, and, with tears and sobs, the old count implored grace for his unhappy son. The emperor replied that mercy was impossible; examples must be made; the sentence of death was already signed and on its way to Milan. The father fell insensible to the ground on hearing this, and the wife with passionate entreaties tried to touch the heart of the emperor; but to no purpose. She almost went mad with grief that night. The empress had her carried to her own apartments, where she showed her the greatest attention, and, in compliance with her piteous appeals, went repeatedly to try to change the resolution of her husband. All night she stayed with the unhappy lady, going to and fro between the emperor and her guest. At last she prevailed on him to commute the sentence. The countess and her father instantly set out for Milan, and never stopped day or night till they reached it, fearing that the sentence might be executed before the arrival of the pardon. The Count Gonsaloni was separated from his companions, and conducted alone to Vienna, where he was put under a searching examination; but nothing could be extracted from him which could compromise anyone. He was proof against every temptation and every falsehood told him in order to shake his faith in his companions. At last Prince Metternich himself came to visit him in prison, and, expressing sympathy and regret to see the count in such a condition, said it depended on himself to make the chains fall from his hands and those of his friends. He had only to tell who it was who had conspired along with them (the Lombard rebels), who it was who had encouraged them to the attempt. What he would not tell the judges he could tell him in confidence. Gonsaloni knew whose name it was that he was expected to reveal. Evi-

dence of treason in the Prince of Carignano would have been worth the lives of a score of Carbonari leaders ; for the Austrians desired above all things to cut him off from the succession, and give the throne of Sardinia to an obedient vassal who would carry out their policy—that is, the Duke of Modena.

‘I see you have no confidence in me, count,’ said Prince Metternich, on the prisoner’s repeated declaration that he had nothing more to say. ‘If you wish to confide your secrets to the most august person in the empire, that person will come to see you.’

‘Tell that august person that I have nothing to reveal more than what I have told the judges,’ was the firm reply. The Count Gonfalonieri was thrown into prison, chained and subject to the worst treatment ; he was told he must consider himself dead to the world for evermore. All communication was cut off from his family, from whom he never heard. Twice a year they were informed that he was ‘well’ or ‘ill,’ as the case might be. His devoted wife, who was a woman of superior mind and character, lived only to accomplish his freedom. For ten years she gave herself with untiring zeal to this work, and then died, when the hope of saving him died in her heart. One day the prisoner No. 14 was called out of his cell, and thus addressed : No. 14, the emperor has ordered me to announce to you that your wife is dead ;’ and without another word he was led back to his dungeon.

‘The Austrian Government,’ says La Farina, ‘not content with punishing the conspirators in the provinces subject to her domination, stimulated to severity the other Italian Governments whose subjects had committed no acts of rebellion ; and the most of them needed no stimulus.’

This brief sketch will give an idea, though an imperfect one, of the general state of Italy when Victor Emmanuel II. was born in 1820—a state of things which continued for nearly forty years after, with very little mitigation.

L I F E  
OF  
VICTOR EMMANUEL II.

CHAPTER I.

PARENTAGE.

A MODERN Italian writer says : ' Few families in Europe have flourished so long as the Sabaud, and among its members we do not count one tyrant.'<sup>1</sup> It is a proud boast, that is, if it were absolutely true. But the word *tyrant* is a plastic term, and there are other Italian historians who would be inclined to dispute this statement of the Marquis Gualterio, who is an enthusiastic admirer of the Savoy family. But if it is saying too much to state that it does not count one tyrant, it might be safely said that few dynasties could count so many heroes, famous for their daring deeds, against whom no charge of cowardice could be brought ; false dealing and treachery were also alien to the blood of the Sabauds ; but they were men of fierce ungovernable passions and great ambition.

<sup>1</sup> Gualterio, *Ultimi Rivolgimenti Italiani*.

Legendary records of the Sabaud family date back to the tenth century. Old chronicles relate that in 998 a foreign prince of Northern extraction, exiled from his own country, settled in Burgundy, where, by his military prowess and administrative ability, he rose to power and influence. This prince, so the story ran, was of Saxon birth, the nephew of the Emperor Otho III., banished from his native soil for having slain the empress in a moment of uncontrollable anger, when she detected his infidelity to his uncle. But these early records are no more than tradition, and we are sure of nothing about this gallant prince, not even his name. He first appears to go under the designation of Berold, but in 1003 there is mention made of him as 'Humbert of the White Hand.' It is possible that the Saxon Berold may have changed his name to elude the pursuit of his enemies, or that it may have been changed by the people he lived amongst to a more familiar appellation; but it would appear that Berold and Humbert were one and the same person, and the founder of the Sabaud family.

Humbert of the White Hand is spoken of as the possessor of large territories, and as having erected his family seat or castle at the narrow pass called Moriana, on the frontier of Savoy; hence the title assumed later of Count Moriani. In the course of time these brave, gifted, ambitious counts became Dukes of Savoy (1238), intermarried with the most powerful royalties of Europe, and commanded extraordinary respect and consideration, the smallness of their state taken into account.

The growing power and prosperity of the dukes, and

the geographical position of their states, drew upon them the enmity of their powerful neighbours. In the reign of Charles III., 1536, Savoy and Piedmont were invaded by the Swiss, Spanish, and French ; and for several years the dukedom remained the battleground of foreign powers, while the legitimate prince, by degrees despoiled of all his possessions, died in absolute want, and with him the Sabaud monarchy seemed to have come to a termination. But the wonderful vitality of that dynasty enables it, as we have seen in our days, to survive misfortunes which would extinguish an ordinary race. Charles III. had left one son, who was destined to restore and re-invigorate the family fortunes, and whose courage, genius, and force of character won from his contemporaries the surname of Testa di Ferro (head of iron). He had been early destined for the Church because of the weakness of his legs, and was usually called 'the little Cardinal,' the Pope having promised him such preferment when he came of age. But his elder brother dying, and the succession so devolving upon him, the boy threw off the monk's frock, buckled on the sword, and added to his classic and philosophic studies the arts of war and government. Emmanuel Philibert showed great aptitude and talent in the various branches of learning to which he gave his attention, but his genius was essentially military.

When still a mere boy he had attached himself to the Emperor Charles V., and followed his standard through all the wars that then desolated Europe, serving him faithfully, but never losing sight of the interests of



his own unhappy and oppressed country, for the relief of which he never ceased to implore the emperor, though with little or no result. Emmanuel Philibert won for himself, by the might of his sword, and by the genius of his statecraft, the restitution of his ancestral dominions, the people of which had always remained faithful to their legitimate prince. He was offered the hand of Elizabeth Tudor of England ; but hearing that the princess herself was not quite agreeable to the match, he declined. He then married the Duchess de Berry, sister of the King of France—this marriage being part of the treaty by which his dominions were restored—and had one son, who succeeded him. Emmanuel Philibert was great in peace as in war ; he brought his *testa di ferro* to bear upon the management of his state ; and if this early part of his reign had not been darkened by the persecutions of the Waldensians, he might have been called a model prince. These persecutions, however, were far less cruel than those of the other Catholic princes, by whom Emmanuel Philibert was driven to take severe measures in order to prevent a foreign intervention for the purpose of eradicating the heresy. He was not a bigot by any means, and adopted these repressive measures more from reasons of state than fanaticism. He found that his subjects, Protestant and Catholic, when left to themselves, were constantly making war upon one another, and he thought it best to compel the minority to conform, and live '*Catholicamente*,' in order to maintain peace. When he found that did not answer, he became more tolerant, and granted certain privileges to the proscribed sect.

The Testa di Ferro remains to this day a most popular hero in Piedmont ; for the people, feeling that to his courage and genius they owe their national existence, overlook the loose morality of the gifted and patriotic chief, as incident to the times in which he lived. 'All his good qualities were his own, the bad ones he drew from the age,' says Ricotti, the historian of the Piedmontese monarchy.

Somewhat different from the description of this famous prince given by Italian writers is the picture drawn by the masterly pen of the Anglo-Saxon republican, Motley, who seems to delight in stripping sixteenth century heroes of the virtues with which the popular voice of their respective countries had endowed them. The glorious Count Egmont, the flower of Flemish chivalry, the Bayard of the Netherlands, shrinks into a rude soldier, vain, ignorant, and arrogant. The good Caligny, who had 'more elevated views than many of his contemporaries,' is introduced in the act of surprising a sleeping city in time of truce. In fact, William the Silent is the only one of the popular heroes of the day whom this merciless iconoclast leaves standing on his pedestal. It is not to be expected, then, that a soldier of fortune like Emmanuel Philibert should be described as other than 'unscrupulous;' had he been scrupulous, he would have had no business to take part in the councils of European princes as they then stood. Here is his portrait at twenty-seven years of age, when he was appointed Governor of the Netherlands.

The Duke of Savoy had become one of the most

experienced and successful commanders of the age, and an especial favourite of the emperor. He had served with Alva in the campaigns against the Protestants of Germany, and in other important fields. War being his element, he considered peace as undesirable, although he could recognise its existence. A truce, however, he held to be a senseless paradox, unworthy of the slightest regard. An armistice, such as was concluded on the February following the abdication, was in his opinion only to be turned to account by dealing insidious and unsuspected blows at the enemy, some portion of whose population might repose confidence in the plighted faith of monarchs and plenipotentiaries. He had a show of reason for his political and military morality, for he only chose to execute the evil which had been practised on himself. His father had been beggared, his mother had died of spite and despair, he had himself been reduced from the rank of a sovereign to that of a mercenary soldier, by spoliations made *in time of truce*.

He was reputed a man of very decided abilities, and was distinguished for headlong bravery. His rashness and personal daring were thought the only drawbacks to his high character as a commander. He had many accomplishments; he spoke Latin, French, Spanish, and Italian with equal fluency, was celebrated for his attachment to the fine arts, and wrote much and with great elegance. Such had been Philibert of Savoy, the pauper nephew of the powerful emperor, the adventurous and vagrant cousin of the lofty Philip, a prince

without a people, a duke without a dukedom, with no hope but in warfare, with no revenue but rapine; the image in person of a bold and manly soldier, small, but graceful and athletic, martial in bearing, wearing his sword under his arm like a corporal, because an internal malady made a belt inconvenient, and ready to turn to a swift account every chance which a new series of campaigns might open to him. With his new salary as governor, his pensions, and the remains of his possessions in Nice and Piedmont, he had now the splendid annual income of one hundred thousand crowns, and was sure to spend it all.<sup>1</sup>

Victor Amadeus, the second of that name, and fifteenth Duke of Savoy, was the first prince of the family who assumed the title of King, 1703. He was a sickly, inert youth, who allowed his mother to rule as regent, even after he had attained his majority. Suddenly, however, he seems to have awakened from his lethargy, and shaken off the tyranny of the duchess. With the sovereign power once in his hands, he developed a surprising energy of character, tact, and firmness. He married the niece of Louis XIV. of France; but this alliance, instead of being an advantage to the young duke, proved a misfortune, since it gave the 'Grand Monarque' a pretext for meddling in the affairs of Savoy and treating the prince as his vassal. At last the overbearing haughtiness of King Louis drove Victor Amadeus to declare war, with the hope of succours from

<sup>1</sup> *The Rise of the Dutch Republic.*

Spain. 'But more than to my allies I trust to the valour and loyalty of my nobility and my people; to these a Prince of Savoy has never yet appealed in vain,' he said, addressing the council.

The war was long and disastrous for Savoy, but year after year the indomitable courage of the duke led him to renew it, rather than submit to humiliating conditions. No sooner was this over than other wars succeeded, the Duke of Savoy being sometimes on the side of France, sometimes on the side of Germany, but almost always the sufferer. The last great contest, in which the enemy had carried his arms to the walls of Turin, ended favourably for Victor Amadeus, who displayed extraordinary skill and courage during the siege, and for the time overturned the Bourbon power in Italy. The treaty which followed made him King of Sicily, 1703, afterwards exchanged for Sardinia, and some other territories adjoining his frontier.

This prince's reign marks a long step in the rising fortunes of the House of Savoy, and so deserves the brief notice which we cannot afford to give to his successors, though some of them were very distinguished. He was pious like all his family; and in gratitude for the deliverance of his country from the French yoke, he erected the church of Superga, used as a royal mausoleum, on the spot where he defeated the enemy. The stain upon his fame is the painful fact that for a time he bowed to the dictates of the French king, and allowed a war of extermination to be waged against the unhappy Huguenots and Waldensians who had fortified themselves

in the mountains of Savoy. At that time, however, he had not made up his mind that he had the power to resist Louis' authority; after he had once taken up arms against the French, these persecutions were not renewed.

The princes of Savoy generally left a goodly number of sons to perpetuate their name and honours. In the beginning of the present century, however, this robust and long-lived family came very near extinction, when no less than six brothers died without leaving male issue. Three of these died unmarried; the other three succeeded each other to the throne, took wives and lived to be old, but left only female offspring. The eldest, Charles Emmanuel IV., was deceived by his French allies, and tricked into concessions, till at last he was compelled by the republican government to abdicate and seek refuge in Tuscany, where he became a Jesuit monk.

Victor Emmanuel I. succeeded his brother, was persecuted by the French emperor, and driven into the island of Sardinia, where he remained till Napoleon was himself confined to the narrower limits of Elba, when he returned to his capital, to the great joy of the Piedmontese people. Victor Emmanuel was a brave, honest, good-hearted man, but of limited intellect, with prejudices which had their roots firmly fixed in mediæval soil. He was a conscientious despot, and to change the ways of his house would have seemed to him sacrilege. He might, nevertheless, have listened to reason, and come to see what the present century required, if it had not been for Austrian influence. The emperor had ex-

torted a promise from him that he never would grant a free constitution, and that promise held him so firmly as a man of honour that he chose to lay down his crown rather than break it.

He was succeeded by his last brother, Charles Felix, a man in no way more enlightened, and with a less kindly nature. With Charles Felix the House of Savoy would have come to an ignominious termination had there not been a collateral branch, descended in seven generations from Charles Emmanuel I., of which one young scion was in existence, the sole hope of the Savoy dynasty, his father having died when he was two years old, and left no other son.

Thomas, fifth son of Charles Emmanuel I., born in 1596, was invested by his father with a rich inheritance of 'castles, territories, and jurisdictions, with the title of Prince of Carignano, for himself and his descendants.' The seventh Prince of Carignano and Savoy in direct line was Charles Albert, born 1798, and left an orphan two years later to the guardianship of his mother, a princess of Saxony, who kept him far from his cousins, and gave him a much more liberal education than he would have received at their hands. It was a grief to the royal brothers that their heir should not have been reared according to the traditions of the family. The Austrian rulers also were distressed about the education of the future King of Sardinia; and Prince Metternich, having intercepted letters from the Princess Carignano to her son, wrote to King Victor advising him to remove the boy from the influence of one whom he described as

a lady of 'detestable political principles, fomenting liberal ideas in the mind of Charles Albert.'

The young prince spent some time at a military school in Paris, and at the age of sixteen was made lieutenant of dragoons by Napoleon. His education was completed at Geneva under the direction of a very learned Protestant divine.

For all his liberal education, Charles Albert was as devout a Catholic as any of his predecessors. He was by nature profoundly religious, and his faith was firmly, indissolubly fixed in the Catholic Church. His political principles were liberal, just, generous, his love of country sincere. The conflicting elements of love of liberty, and love of the Church, warring in his soul, made him melancholy, reserved, inconsistent, 'incomprehensible'<sup>1</sup>—wore out his mortal frame, and before he was past the meridian of life brought him to a premature grave. The noble, chivalrous character of this prince, and the pathetic story of his unhappy reign, make him personally quite as interesting as his successful son, whose stronger and tougher fibre was able to bear the strain which broke the father's heart.

Prince Charles Albert married the daughter of the Grand Duke of Tuscany and had a son, who was only a year old at the time of the rising in Piedmont in 1821. The Prince of Carignano was then in his twenty-third year, very tall, and of noble, dignified aspect, with a face pale, grave, thoughtful, almost severe. His man-

<sup>1</sup> 'Is it not true that I am an incomprehensible man?' he said once to a friend.



ners were reserved and cold, but gentle ; he had a sweet low voice, and when he spoke there was some subtle fascination in his bearing which excited interest and sympathy. Though not on good terms with his cousin, Charles Felix, who disliked and distrusted him because of his Liberalism, he had completely won the affection of his distant cousin, King Victor, whom he called 'Uncle,' and to whom he was faithfully attached. For this reason the young prince was much beloved by the people ; the Liberals of Piedmont being loyal to the king, and very anxious to secure his heir as their leader, and so cut him off from Austrian influence. The Carbonari had gained a strong footing in the Sardinian States, and though all the Constitutionalists were not connected with the society, they were willing to work in concert with it to effect their object. The Piedmontese army was full of the idea of a grand military *coup*, by which they would liberate Lombardy, and annex it to the kingdom of Sardinia. But they all reckoned without their host ; the sovereign's consent was wanting to this agreeable arrangement. The Liberals presented a petition to him ; and a false report was spread that he had said, that if his people asked a constitution he would not deny it. The joy caused by this report was quickly quenched when the people saw military preparations going on to resist any movement that might be made.

Just at this critical and exciting moment some foolish students appeared at the theatre with red caps, and were arrested by the police. Their companions attempted a rescue and were themselves dragged to prison.

Next morning great excitement prevailed, and a cry was raised about university privileges. The students barricaded the college, and vowed they would not open it till the prisoners were released. A body of grenadiers assaulted the college, broke it open, and charged the helpless students, who were found wounded in all parts of the building. Great indignation was felt throughout the city, for almost all the respectable inhabitants had some member of their family in the university. Among those who paid a consolatory visit to the wounded youths was the Prince of Carignano; the news flew like lightning through Turin, and immensely increased his popularity. The conspirators of Lombardy and Piedmont felt that the moment for action had arrived, and Charles Albert must be secured to them.

The famous Count Santorre Santa Rosa, the leader of the Piedmontese 'federates,' opened the matter to Prince Charles, explaining how entirely loyal their intentions were towards the king, and that all they wanted was that he should separate himself from Austria, and become nationalist.

The prince did not utterly reject nor yet accept the proposition. The Marquis Gualterio and Count Ciprario, and all the admirers of Charles Albert who have written narratives of those events, declare that he declined to lead the movement; he would never lend himself to anything like a rebellion against his sovereign. The Carbonari, on the other hand, branded him as a traitor, who deserted them in the last moment. He

himself left a narrative in which he protested his innocence of treason, either towards his king or the revolutionists. La Farina, who is, on the whole, just and true, and not by any means blinded by affection for the Sabaud family, says that after half consenting, he got frightened and withdrew his assent, and then hesitated so long that the revolutionists were induced to precipitate the movement in order to cut off his retreat. Santa Rosa, who was the leading spirit of the party, and the medium of negotiations, says in his account of the transaction, that 'he would, and he would not.'

This is most likely true. Charles Albert was as brave as a lion when his duty was clear before him; but he had an unhappy conscience, which was constantly giving him contradictory counsels, and dragging him in opposite directions. At one moment doubtless he was dominated by his love of liberty and justice, while at another he shrank from what would appear to stain his ancient name with a spot of disloyalty to his kinsman and sovereign. He was alike incapable of treason to the king who trusted him implicitly, or to the revolutionists who had confided in him. A less conscientious man would have stuck to the conservative party, cried 'Viva il Rè assoluto!' and won honour by so doing; or he would have silenced the claims of kindred, told himself that the interests of his country were paramount to all others, and sailed into power on the wave of popular enthusiasm. He did neither, and 'between the two stools he fell to the ground.'

The Count Santa Rosa printed an address to the

Piedmontese calling on them to rise, with the war-cry, 'Viva Italia e la Costituzione! Guerra a Austria!' In Alessandria, a great military depôt, the Carbonari proclaimed the Spanish constitution, and declared war against Austria 'in the name of the Kingdom of Italy.' The soldiers thought it no violation of their oath to take part in this movement; for their king should still be their king; they only wanted to make him great and powerful in spite of himself. On the arrival of this news at Turin there was great disturbance and excitement, Victor Emmanuel hastened from his country seat to the capital, and called a council in which the queen and Prince Charles Albert took a part. He issued a proclamation to the effect that there was nothing in the movement, and that it did not deserve any serious notice.

'Tranquillity is not the least disturbed in our capital, where we are with our family and our beloved cousin the Prince of Savoy-Carignano, who has given us proofs of his constant fidelity.' That sentence must have hurt Prince Charles's delicate conscience, and perhaps helped to make him break utterly with the revolutionists.

But the capital was not tranquil; next day some of the military, uniting with the students and citizens, marched through the streets with the red, white and green banner, crying 'Viva la Costituzione! Viva l'Italia!' The guards flew to arms, and one officer was killed when trying to force his way through the people with drawn sword. Prince Charles was then sent, in the

king's name, to ask the people what it was they desired. He came on horseback, unattended by military escort, and was received with warm applause. 'Our hearts are faithful to the king,' was the reply of the Turinese, 'but we wish to withdraw him from perfidious counsels. The Spanish constitution, war with Austria, these are our desires.'

Victor Emmanuel did not think any reforms were likely to be beneficial; but his mind would have gradually opened to the necessities of the times, and he would then and there have acceded to his people's wish, but for the fatal promise which the Emperor of Austria had extorted from him—

His honour, rooted in dishonour, stood;  
And faith, unfaithful, kept him falsely true.

But he would not shed his subjects' blood. He abdicated in favour of his brother, Charles Felix, then in Modena, and appointed Charles Albert regent with full regal powers.

The abdication of Victor Emmanuel was a great grief to the Constitutionalists. Santa Rosa wrote: 'The night of March 13, 1821, was fatal to my country. So many swords raised in defence of liberty dropped, so many dear hopes vanished like a dream. The country, it is true, did not fall with the king; but the country was for us *in* the king; Victor Emmanuel himself personified it; and the young promoters of that military revolution often exclaimed, "Perhaps some day he will pardon us for having made him king of six millions of Italians."'

The new king, Charles Felix, was devoted to the House of Austria, a firm upholder of absolutism, an enemy to liberty, and inferior to his brother in point of feeling. Even the devoted adherents of the Savoy family find little to admire in this prince, except that he was a man of his word, and did not perjure himself, as the custom was among Italian sovereigns.

If Charles Albert had been the self-seeking man that some writers have represented him, he had now a grand opportunity of seizing the reins of power, and establishing a popular government without a shadow of dishonour, his oath of allegiance to the abdicated king being dissolved, and all the authority of the state vested in his hands. But instead, he made desperate efforts to reconcile the monarchy with liberty; he wanted to be faithful alike to king and people, and he displeased both.

Great agitation reigned in Turin on the night of the abdication of Victor Emmanuel I., with intense impatience to hear the regent's programme. The ministers of the late king counselled him to declare the Spanish constitution, and so save the country from a bloody revolution. The people stood all night round the regent's palace, and sent a deputation to him to explain their wishes. They disliked and distrusted Charles Felix, and they wished to have the revolution carried into effect before he had time to come from Modena, or send any express commands. 'How can I proclaim the constitution in the king's absence?' said the regent; and, when urged to it in order to avoid bloodshed, he replied proudly, 'I am ready to die for him I represent.' The

liberal counsels prevailed, however, and Charles Albert came on the balcony and proclaimed the constitution, in the midst of intense agitation, and at the same time swore fidelity to the new king, Charles Felix. In his proclamation he said :—

Our respect and submission to his majesty Carlo Felice, to whom the throne belongs, would have hindered us making any fundamental change in the laws of the realm till the sovereign's intentions were known ; but as the force of circumstances is manifest, and we desire to render to the new king his people safe, uninjured, and happy, and not in a civil war,—having maturely considered everything, and with the advice of our council, we have decided, in the hope that his majesty, moved by the same considerations, will give his approval that the constitution of Spain shall be promulgated.

Charles Felix did not give his approval ; he showed his disapprobation very strongly, and ordered his young cousin to quit Turin and go to Novara. He immediately obeyed ; and the secrecy of his departure awakened the suspicion of treason in the minds of the revolutionists. On his arrival in Novara another letter met him, requiring him on his allegiance to betake himself instantly to Florence, where his family should speedily join him.

Carlo Felice took possession of his capital shortly after, when the leaders of the revolution, and particularly the officers of the army, were visited with the heaviest punishments. Massimo Azeglio says he did not merit

the name the Liberals gave him of 'Carlo Feroce,' but there is no doubt he was very severe.

The Prince of Carignano, distrusted and hated by his cousin the king because of his liberalism, maligned and execrated by the revolutionary party because of his loyalty, took up his abode with his father-in-law, the Duke of Tuscany. Conscious rectitude of purpose may sustain an old man, who has learned by experience what the gratitude of princes and peoples is worth; but it could not and did not sustain Charles Albert under this double trial. He was only twenty-three, a young soldier, full of generous, chivalrous sentiments; and to be so wronged by his king and country, for both of whom he was ready to die, was more than he could bear. He desired to return to Turin, and be tried by court-martial. But his friends, particularly the French ambassador in Florence, strongly dissuaded him from putting himself into the hands of his enemies so entirely. Austria was using all her secret influence against him; and Charles Felix contemplated cutting him off from the succession, and appointing a regent during the minority of the little Prince Victor. The bitterness of the exile's life at Florence became unsupportable, and he begged permission to travel, which prayer was answered immediately by a commission to serve in the Spanish war, where he distinguished himself by extraordinary bravery.

In accepting this commission, and engaging to fight in the French army against the liberties of Spain, Charles Albert committed the only inexcusable mistake of his



life; and we know not how to account for it, except that he was in a desperate frame of mind and wished to meet death, which would appear from the reckless manner in which he exposed himself to danger.

He was a man of strange contradictions, and it is probable that the violence of the Carbonari, and their bitter vituperations of himself, had thrown him back into the arms of the retrograde party; and the clergy, to whose influence he had always been subject, had worked upon his mind so as to win him over to see things from their point of view. It was a fatal step, which divorced him from the national party, and made him disliked and distrusted, even in his own Piedmont, where he had once been held so dear.

Charles Albert was recalled to Sardinia by Charles Felix in 1824, and a reconciliation took place later, shortly before the king's death, which occurred in 1831, when the Prince of Carignano ascended the throne peacefully, but with no demonstrations of joy.

Charles Albert seems to have been born under an unlucky star, for he invariably took the wrong road in the turning points of life; and with the best and most disinterested intentions he ruined the cause he most wished to serve. He was always destined to be misjudged and misunderstood. Half his honesty and justice, and a third of his morality, would have sufficed to carry an ordinary prince through life with a pretty fair reputation, while he was branded as a traitor, a tyrant, an executioner.

When Charles Albert ascended the throne, Mazzini

had instituted a new secret society called *Giovane Italia* (Young Italy), which put the Good Cousins and all the rest quite out of fashion. The society did not begin as republican, at least did not so profess itself. The great conspirator who set the machine to work, and directed its movements with such consummate skill, made overtures to most of the crowned heads, or those nearest the thrones, in Italy, before he declared war against monarchies.

To Charles Albert he wrote a long letter, offering his services to him if he would consent to lead the Liberal cause. And here again, if Charles Albert had not been conscientiously conservative he would have been tempted by the dazzling prospects so ably depicted.

'Sire,' wrote the great revolutionist :—

All Italy waits for one word—one only—to make herself yours. Proffer this word to her ! Place yourself at the head of the nation, and write on your banner : 'Union, Liberty, Independence.' Proclaim the liberty of thought. Declare yourself the vindicator, the interpreter of popular rights, the regenerator of all Italy. Liberate her from the barbarians. Build up the future ; give your name to a century ; begin a new era from your day. All humanity has declared that kings do not belong to it ; history bears out the sentence with facts. Contradict humanity and history. Compel it to write under the names of Washington and Kosciuszco, born citizens, another name greater than these : to say, There was a throne erected by twenty million

free men, who wrote on its base : ‘ To Carlo Alberto, born king, Italy regenerated by him . . . ’ Select the way that accords with the desire of the nation ; maintain it unalterably ; be firm, and await your time ; you have the victory in your hands. Sire, on this condition we bind ourselves round you, we proffer you our lives, we will lead to your banner the little states of Italy. We will paint to our brothers the advantages that are born of union ; we will promote national subscriptions, patriotic gifts ; we will preach the word that creates armies. . . . Unite us, Sire, and we shall conquer.

To this stirring appeal Charles Albert would not listen ; he seemed completely transformed into the legitimist sovereign of the old school. Then *Giovane Italia* lost all confidence in kings, became republican, and made war on Charles Albert with the bitterness of a suitor scorned. Seditious publications were circulated through his realm, exciting his subjects against him—the officers of the army in particular Mazzini tried to seduce from their allegiance. A conspiracy was discovered, and the promoters put on their trial. The bad feeling between sovereign and people was fanned into a flame by the Jesuits, who were then, as always, the creatures of the Austrian government, though Charles Albert did not know it. They carried the most alarming reports to the king's ears ; they gave him information of a frightful plot to overturn the monarchy and the altar by means of the most diabolical crimes.

These stories were for the most part inventions, got

up to frighten the king, and drive him into severe repressive measures, and thus sever him for ever from the Liberal party. It was afterwards discovered that the head of the police was in the pay of Austria ; but, unfortunately, too late to prevent certain military executions which might with advantage have been commuted to a lighter punishment, and which filled the king with remorseful sadness.

In 1833 conspiracies broke out in the states of Italy, simultaneously with that in Piedmont, and were punished much more severely. In Naples there reigned Ferdinand II.—quite a different character from his grandfather, Ferdinand I. He was neither immoral, intemperate, nor extravagant ; on the contrary, he began his reign by an edifying simplicity, economy, and piety, which led his subjects to hope that better days than they had been accustomed to were in store for them. But a few years of his reign made them cry out, ‘ Better the rule of the Turks.’ In fact, this prince’s Christianity was no better than his grandfather’s paganism. He was a morose bigot, given up to superstition ; a slave to the Jesuits, who made him model his government on that of Pope Leo XII. In character he resembled Louis XI. of France, but without his ability. There was no falsehood, cruelty, or treachery he was not capable of. Religious persecutions, such as we have described as existing in the papal states, were carried on with vigour. Accusations of heresy were frequent, and for every small offence against the Church’s laws the sinner was subject to corporal punishment, more or less severe, according to the nature

of his offence. It is recorded that 'many citizens died under the infliction of the lash, as much from shame as suffering,' the sentences being carried out in the open squares. When private sins were visited with such severity, we can imagine how the great crime of rebellion would be treated in the Neapolitan states. The executions and proscriptions which took place there, and in the pontifical possessions, reduced the populations considerably ; and, as generally happens in such cases, the most promising young men were those who fell victims to the tyranny of the government. In Modena the duke, having trifled with the Liberal leader, Menotti, in order, it is thought, to draw him into a snare, had to fight for his life in a sudden outburst of rebellion. The same night in which he had overcome this treasonable attempt, he despatched the following characteristic note :—

A terrible conspiracy against me has broken out to-night. The conspirators are in my hands. Send me the hangman.

FRANCIS.

The Austrians, always at hand to crush any rising, swarmed all over Central Italy and Naples, assisting energetically in the punishment of the rebels, and in the work of restoring order, or what they called order. The kingdom of Sardinia alone was not visited by this infliction, its sovereign reserving to himself the right of punishing his own subjects without foreign assistance.

The secret hatred which King Charles nourished toward Austria he was obliged to smother, for he had no means to resist her power. Keeping therefore his plans and desires buried in his own breast, he devoted himself to reforming the semi-barbarous laws still existing in his state—those relating to prison regulations, cruel punishments, disabilities of Jews and Protestants, etc.—and to improving the state of the army.

But the sad, silent king, who lived like an anchorite, devoted to business, rigorous in the performance of religious duties, became more and more of a puzzle to everyone, and was not regarded either with confidence or affection by his subjects. What unhappy years those were to the friendless, lonely monarch, his subjects have since learned, and shed tears of remorse upon the tomb of him whom they justly call 'the martyr of their liberties.'

The desire for national unity, as the only safeguard of liberty, began to be felt more and more by thinking men. Giusti, in his famous poem called 'The Boot' (1836), makes Italy describe herself as made up of patches, and beg her next possessor to have her remade all of 'one piece and one colour;' but this owner must not be a foreigner—

Non Tedesco s'intende, nè Francese ;  
Vorrei una gamba del mio paese.

The book which perhaps best describes the growth of the national spirit in Italy, during the seven years that preceded the great revolutionary era of 1848, is Azeglio's *I Miei Ricordi*. This distinguished man may be said

to have presided at the birth of that spirit ; he certainly watched over its diseased infancy with indefatigable care and patience, and was rewarded by seeing it grow up with a certain robustness of constitution, though it never quite realised his ideal. Azeglio travelled north, south, east, west, trying to sow in the different populations the seeds of national life. It was grievous and discouraging to find the youth of the educated classes generally given up to pleasure, or burning with that patriotic fervour which consisted chiefly in shouting '*Fuori il barbaro ! Fuori lo straniero !*' while the more earnest ones were members of secret societies.

There was, however, a considerable party of moderate men like Azeglio himself, who desired reform if it could be effected without war, and if it could not, were prepared to push matters to the last extremity when a favourable moment arrived. This party went on increasing and gathering new force every year, and at last it became evident that the nation was preparing itself for some grand movement. The premonitory symptoms were felt by the rulers of the land, like the rumbling thunder that precedes a volcanic outburst.

Azeglio, who loved law and order, trembled for what might come. He had endeavoured to educate the youth of Italy in a higher political creed than the assassination of tyrants. He desired that the war should be solely for the expulsion of the foreigner, and his earnest wish was that the national forces should be united and led by a native sovereign. And where in Italy was there what might be called a native sovereign ?

They were all satraps of Austria, with the exception of the Pope and the King of Sardinia. The Pope was out of the question, and Azeglio naturally turned his thoughts to his own king, who, if a despot, was at least an Italian, and maintained the independence of his little state against Austrian encroachments.

The bad reputation which he had among the Liberal party made it difficult for Azeglio to persuade his friends to share his hopes. 'What is it you want?' he said, trying to argue his Roman colleagues into a practical view of the case. 'You wish to drive the Austrians out of Italy, and to check the power of the priests. If you tell them to go, it is probable they will refuse. You must force them, and what force have you? None. Then you must unite with those who have, that is, with Piedmont. She at least has an independent life, and money, and an army.'

'What, Carlo Alberto! would you have us hope in him?' asked his Roman friend.

'If you will not hope, don't hope. But you must then resign yourselves, and hope in nothing.'

'But '21 and '33?' persists the Roman.

'21 and '33 are not pleasing memories to me any more to than you. Nevertheless there is something to be said in his defence. But, admitting the worst, I repeat that in him you must trust, or in no one. Were we inviting Charles Albert to engage in a scheme contrary to his interests, for pure heroism and to serve Italy, then you might ask, "Shall we confide in the traitor of '21 and the executioner of '33?" But we only ask him, when an



opportunity offers, to let us aid him to become more great and powerful. If you invite a thief to become an honest man, you may doubt his promise to do so ; but if you invite a thief to rob, I see no reason to think he would fail in his promise.'

Azeglio adds, 'Poor Charles Albert ! Time proved that you did not deserve so harsh a judgment. When I think of my comparison, I am bitter with remorse.'

Azeglio did not make much head in Tuscany, so deep-rooted was the prejudice against the Sardinian king. One gentleman quoted the example of a Roman legion, the soldiers of which shot their general when they found him unfaithful to his duty. 'What sort,' he asked, 'are the Piedmontese soldiers, who suffer Charles Albert to live ?' Azeglio tried to excuse the poor Piedmontese soldiers for not having executed their king, urging in their defence that the times and ideas were so changed since the days of the pagan republic. But he felt the unlucky Roman legion had put him to the rout, and he could make no impression on the mind of the sanguinary Tuscan. Finally, having made the round of all Italy, Azeglio arrived in Turin (1845), and demanded an audience of his sovereign.

We have said that Charles Albert had a fascination for those who approached him. Azeglio had armed himself against this influence, and while the king, who had not seen him for a long time, was courteously inquiring after his welfare, he said to himself, 'Massimo, trust him not !'

'Whence do you come now ?' asked the king.

Azeglio then seized the moment to explain his mission. He said he had been travelling in all parts of Italy, and if his majesty permitted he would like to tell him the state of public affairs. Charles Albert said, 'Pray speak ; I shall be glad to hear you.'

Azeglio spoke at some length. He began by alluding briefly to the rebellions, their causes and effects. Then he passed on to the present disturbed state of the nation ; dwelt on the danger of a revolution at the Pope's death ; but said that for the most part the people were convinced of the folly of such attempts. They desired a new and more moderate plan of action, and they looked to Piedmont only for a leader. He then related all he had done in concert with the reform party, and assured the king that he had never been a member of a secret society.

'And now,' he concluded, 'your majesty will tell me whether you approve or disapprove of what I have done.'

He paused for a reply ; and, according to his preconceived idea of Charles Albert's doubleness, expected an evasive one. Instead of that, the king, without a moment's hesitation, fixed his eyes frankly on those of Azeglio, and said in a calm, resolute tone :—

'Let those gentlemen know that for the present they must remain quiet ; but when the time comes, let them be certain *my life, the lives of my sons, my arms, my treasures—all shall be freely spent in the Italian cause.*'

Azeglio, whose loyalty till now had been of the coldest, was touched by the king's heroic sentiments, and thanked him with emotion for his confidence.

When they both rose to their feet, Charles Albert laid his hands on Azeglio's shoulders, and touched first one cheek and then the other with his own. There was something so solemn, almost funereal, in this embrace, that it somewhat chilled Azeglio's enthusiasm. In after years he said he could never see without a thrill those green silk chairs in the bay-window where they sat while the king offered, through him, to his country, all he possessed—even his life.

Azeglio communicated the result of his interview with the king, in cypher, to his correspondents ; and, in obedience to a suggestion of his majesty, began to write a pamphlet for the furtherance of their scheme. It was to be a vast society extending over all Italy ; its proceedings carried on in open day, without arms, or oaths, or concealment ; its object the gradual redemption of the whole peninsula from the hands of the foreigner. He felt painfully how difficult it was to rouse a population sunk in misery and ignorance to a feeling of citizenship ; and part of the reform scheme was to improve the condition of the people, and educate them. ' Before forming Italy, we must first form the Italians,' he often said.

Great secrecy was observed on the part of the Liberal party so as not to compromise the King of Sardinia ; but in spite of this it crept out that he was giving them his adhesion, and he began to be received with warm demonstrations when he appeared at the reviews. Austria's suspicions were aroused ; but Charles Albert's spirits were raised and sustained by the joyful

news of the accession to the papal throne of the reforming liberal Pio Nono.

Azeglio, who had been banished from Rome for his attack on the late popes, wheedled himself into the good graces of the new pontiff, and used all his arts to bind him to the reform party. He writes thus to his wife :—

I found them completely changed—joyous, full of hope and confidence in the future. The old party falls lower and lower every day ; it still works mischief, however.

He evidently thought he could lead the good-natured pontiff by the nose ; and he conciliated him in every possible way, while he worked hard by speeches and meetings to make the people loyal to their new sovereign, trusting altogether to gentle persuasion to obtain the desired reforms. He writes again to his wife :—

The Pope was much pleased, and in dismissing me said, ‘Marchese d’Azeglio, I bless you. Continue always in the moderate course you have chosen.’ I have now the approbation of Pio Nono, which is no little thing. We are forming a society called *Concordia*, which I hope will extend over all Italy ; objects : to improve the condition, moral, civil, and social, of the nation ; means : law, moderation, absolute publicity, absolute absence of secrets and mysteries. We shall combat the excesses of both parties ; and in the people, gambling in the lotteries, and drink. We shall promote education

and establish schools. We shall send into the provinces agents to propagate our doctrines. Amongst its founders are monsignori and citizens of the highest class. The Duke Cesarini gives funds, and his palace, provisionally, for our meetings.

Azeglio and his colleagues had their hands full, preaching patience and moderation to the Romans, promising that the Pope would institute all needful reforms—and at the same time urging Pio Nono forward, while the powerful retrograde party were pulling him back.

The people believed the leaders of the moderate party; they believed in the reforming Pope, who was at that moment the most popular sovereign in Europe. The 'Hymn of Pio Nono' was sung at the theatre amidst rapturous applause, the audience standing and waving their handkerchiefs. In short, the enthusiastic Romans were wild with loyalty to their priest-king, under whose beneficent rule religion and liberty were to be at last reconciled. The Pope's charming manners, and benevolent, handsome face, did a great deal to win the faith of the people; and they followed him in thousands to his palace to receive the papal benediction from the balcony. This ceremony of marching to the Quirinal, and calling out the Pope, became a regular institution at Rome. Azeglio describes it as a soul-stirring scene, the vast piazza filled with thousands and thousands of people, who, at the sight of the noble figure and beaming face of the Pontiff, dropped on their

knees, while in a voice of thrilling sweetness he gave the Benediction.

But there was another power at work besides the Moderates and the Retrogrades, who were tearing Pio Nono in opposite directions. There were the members of the Society of Giovane Italia, who, acting under the directions of Mazzini, were exciting the people to violent demonstrations, in order to goad the Pope to sweeping reforms, and make him commit himself irretrievably to an advanced liberal policy. These agents of Mazzini gathered the people together on every possible pretext, and by degrees began to introduce national cries such as '*Viva l'Italia! Fuori lo straniero!*' mixed up with applause and loyal exclamations for the sovereign. Still, though one secret society thus worked upon the people, and played upon the vanity of the Pontiff, there is no just reason to believe that the great bulk of the Romans were insincere in the affection that they professed for Pio Nono, or that Pio Nono was insincere in his professions of affection for his subjects, and his earnest desire to improve their condition. He had been an excellent bishop, and he would have made an excellent Pope, if circumstances had not rendered it next to impossible. The writings of Balbo, and the philosopher-priest Gioberti, had made a deep impression on him, and he had come to the throne with the noblest aspirations of regenerating not the Roman states only, but all Italy. On the other hand, the subjects of Leo XII. and Gregory XVI. might well be fascinated by such a man as Pius IX., whose many virtues shone with all the more

lustre from the contrast presented by the character of his predecessors. The fact that this mutual good-will did not last is not a reason to believe it feigned. There were causes enough in the great divergence of opinion which afterwards arose between the Pope and his subjects to create the breach which ended so unhappily, without accusing either party of unusual fickleness.

In the beginning of 1847 the Romans began to feel restive and impatient. For nearly a year they had been fed on smiles, benedictions, and a few trifling concessions. Azeglio writes to his brother :—

You can tell the king, if a favourable opportunity occurs—I do not care to write it by post, but I want you to know it as soon as possible—I am convinced—it wrings my heart to say it—but I am convinced *the magic of Pio Nono will not last*. He is an angel, but is surrounded by demons; he has a disordered state and corrupt elements, and he will not be able to combat the obstacles.

Meantime Charles Albert was making preparations which could no longer be concealed. He had medals struck with his image, and the motto, which he had taken from the shield of a remote ancestor, *J'attends mon astre*, and secretly distributed them amongst the Liberals. Azeglio's pamphlets were also circulated by royal permission in the Sardinian states, though he did not dare to print them there for fear of compromising the king before the moment for action arrived.

Although Pio Nono had done little more than smile,

and bless the Liberals when they put themselves strikingly under his notice, yet he had offended the despotic power of Austria, and in the summer of 1847 she proceeded to the hostile step of violating the papal territory and occupying Ferrara. All the Roman provinces were ready to rush to arms to resent the indignity. Money and arms poured in from all quarters to the Holy Father, with ardent protestations of devotion. Charles Albert despatched a letter to say he regarded the quarrel as his own, it being a violation of the independence of the Italian princes. But the Pope held back and vacillated, putting off taking any decided step beyond sending an indignant protest to the Austrian general, until the Romans rose and threatened to burn the cardinals' palaces if troops were not sent to defend the provinces. Then, unwillingly, he gave his consent, but faltered again, and wished to recall them when they arrived at their destination, declaring he never meant to *make war*, only to *protect* his states against aggression.

Charles Albert meanwhile was bracing his nerves for the death-struggle with Austria ; and as a preliminary step he decided on granting the constitution so long desired by the Piedmontese people. This important act would, he knew, give mortal offence to Austria, and cut him off from all kinship with the other Italian princes. But he had the Pope on his side ; and he said in the council, 'If Austria is against us, Italy will be with us.' Next day, February 7, 1848, a royal proclamation made public his consent to the much-desired *statuto*. The citizens of Turin, wild with joy, but still doubting, ran



to the palace, singing the 'Hymn of Pio Nono,' then a national song. The pale face and tall form of Charles Albert appeared on the balcony, with his sons by his side, holding the tricolour in his hands. The people shouted, wept, embraced each other, and swore eternal fealty to the House of Savoy.

What the conscientious King of Piedmont granted voluntarily, the sovereigns of Tuscany and Naples were compelled to cede to the unanimous demand of their people.

All Italy was on fire. Lombardy and Venice were already in arms, and the Milanese, after five days of terrible fighting, drove the Austrian troops out of the city. The declaration of the War of Independence could be no longer delayed. The last grand act of the drama in which Charles Albert played the part of hero began with that declaration of war; the rest of his life is so bound up with that of his son, whose story we have undertaken to relate, that we will pursue it no further in this chapter.

## CHAPTER II.

BIRTH, EDUCATION, MARRIAGE. A.D. 1820-42.

ON March 14, 1820, in the Carignano Palace, Turin, the eldest son of Charles Albert of Savoy-Carignano first saw the light. The child was born a little after midnight, and next day he was received into the bosom of the Catholic Church, King Victor Emmanuel and his queen assisting at the ceremony, in which the august godfather bestowed on his little cousin his own name, and a liberal supply of other appellations. The child was baptised, Vittorio Emanuele Maria Alberto Eugenio Ferdinando Tommaso.

Before a year passed the Carbonari revolution, and the consequent change of sovereigns, drove the Prince of Carignano into exile. The infant years of Victor Emmanuel were passed in a villa outside of Florence, called Poggio Imperiale, and there, when he was two years old, the life on which Italy's destinies hung was all but extinguished. His nurse, Teresa Bacca, a Turin woman, having accidentally set fire to his bed-curtains, only with difficulty saved him from the flames. He was slightly burned, and the unfortunate nurse died a few days after of the injuries she received. A tablet placed

on the spot by the Provisional Government of Tuscany commemorates the accident.

In this same year, 1822, was born Charles Albert's second son, the Duke of Genoa. This baby brother was the object of intense interest and affection to the little Victor, who used to run every minute to the nursery, which adjoined his own room, to look at him and kiss him. His mother writes of him :—

My little Victor is very docile ; I have, however, some difficulty in teaching him, for he wants to be always running or jumping, but when he once learns a thing he rarely forgets it.

The future hero's chief delight in infant years was playing at war—constructing armies of little wooden soldiers, and putting them through military evolutions. The child felt with his parents, that he was an exile from the paternal abode, and at four years old he said to his mother, 'I am impatient to see papa's house.'

Very soon after this they returned to Piedmont, and lived in retirement in their castle of Racconigi, where Charles Albert devoted himself to the mental and physical training of his sons. He wished to give them a high intellectual education, but also to familiarise them with a soldier's duties, so that they should not be inferior to their ancestors in courage, strength, and daring. So, between learned bishops and professors in the classroom, and military tutors and drill-sergeants out of doors, the young princes had a pretty hard time of it,

and not a minute to spare to get into mischief, from morning till night.

They were up at five o'clock in the morning, when they began their studies, and continued them till late in the day, only broken by the hours allotted for meals, and diversified by a fencing lesson, a long walk, or a six hours' ride on horseback.

The Princess of Carignano did not like to see her little boys kept under such severe soldierly discipline, and often reproached her husband for his excessive rigour.

But notwithstanding this severity, and the strict court etiquette which always accompanies an absolute monarchy, and which obliges the son of the prince to maintain towards his sire an attitude of distant respect, —Victor Emmanuel understood and appreciated his good father, whom he loved devotedly, and regarded as an ideal hero.

When Prince Victor was fifteen his father succeeded to the throne; and just about that time he wrote a life of one of his ancestors, Amadeus VI., surnamed Conte Verde. This juvenile production is dedicated 'À Papa' on one side of the page, and 'Au Roi' on the other, and signed 'P. Victor de Savoie,' in a bold clear hand. The letter, which is prettily composed in the French language, begins 'Sire,' and concludes with these words:—

Deign, my very dear father, to throw a kind glance on this effort of your son Victor, full of the desire to please you, and to give you some proofs of his tender

and respectful attachment, proofs which he would have wished to render more worthy of you.

Almost all the compositions of the Duke of Savoy at this period treat of military subjects, such as the arrangement of an army in a plain, the siege of a fortress, the passage of a river, the defence of a wood, etc. One is entitled, 'The History of the Treaties between the different Powers of Europe, in which reference is made to the Savoy Dynasty.' The subjects were suitable studies for the heir to the throne which must be held by the sword.

Every Wednesday morning in Turin, in spite of burning sun, or pouring rain, or drifting snow, the drums beat and the trumpets blew for the military to repair to the Piazza d'Armi, where the King held a grand review, in which he was always assisted by his sons. An extraordinary sympathy and friendship had always united these brothers from infancy. They were inseparable as twins; no boyish emulation, no ambitious rivalry in manhood, ever cooled the fraternal affection, which is a beautiful trait in the character of the Savoy family. The brothers were equally brave, generous, kind-hearted, but Victor's fiery, impetuous nature, and overflowing animal spirits, were tempered by the prudent counsels of the graver, calmer Ferdinand, who resembled his father in character much more than did the elder son.

Prince Victor's fine, manly qualities, and pleasant, genial manners endeared him to all his teachers and

masters; in a special manner to two—Monsignor Charvaz, afterwards Archbishop of Genoa, and Colonel Dabormida, afterwards general and minister of state. The general's affection for his royal pupil surpassed the common devotion of a faithful subject, and was fully returned by the prince. Having received one day from the king, his father, an intimation of his friend's promotion, he writes thus :—

Carissimo,—I experienced the greatest pleasure in receiving this note that his majesty sends me, while I listen to the relations of the Minister of War, *J'ai signé la patente de Dabormida*, and I hasten to announce it to you. I do not know, dear friend, and dear lieutenant-colonel, how I can express to you the gratification this gives me, but you know how I love you, and that everything that gives you pleasure gives me a great deal. . . . We have here (at Genoa) the third son of Prince ——. He is a handsome youth, tall as my brother, but very *efflanqué*. We are always together; he asks me everything he ought to do, and seems much embarrassed with his person, which ought not to be after ten years' travelling in all parts of the globe. He is about my age, and knows nothing of the usages of the world. One evening he was in company at the Lady —'s, and sat opposite to her before a roasting fire, without knowing how to take himself away. Monday we must manœuvre with seventeen battalions before the prince. I shall command the Savona regiment and Royal Marines, forming a reserve.

The Duke of Savoy had now reached his twenty-first birthday; and on the whole Charles Albert was not disappointed in the heir on whom he had lavished such care and affection. His father's training had not succeeded in making him a learned man, for his natural bent was towards action rather than study; but he was a keen observer of men and things, had a large share of good sense, wide sympathies, and shared to the full his father's generous ambition to liberate Italy from the foreign yoke, and bring fresh lustre to the ancient race from which he sprang.

This *ancestry worship*, with other chivalrous ideas of bygone times, is a striking characteristic of the House of Savoy. The children of that house have always been nourished and fed upon the traditions of ancestral heroes, and taught that they ought to endeavour to resemble them to the utmost of their ability. The religious reverence which every son of the Sabaud family entertains for the early founders of the house, as much as for his immediate progenitors, has always acted as a powerful incentive to their daring deeds. 'A people,' says Macaulay, 'who take no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered by remote descendants.'

Without a particle of personal vanity, this pride of race was a passion in Victor Emmanuel. An exiled Neapolitan general once said to him that there were two sovereigns in Europe who might serve as a warning and example for a young prince—Ferdinand of Naples, and Leopold of Belgium; to which Victor replied

with a proud smile and flashing eye, 'General, I need not go out of my own family for examples of loyalty and heroism. Enough for me to remember the deeds of my ancestors.'

The prince was of middle stature, broad shouldered, powerfully built, with a brown complexion, snub nose, and a heavy underjaw ; his full brown beard, and fierce-looking moustache curling upon his cheek, were not then such striking characteristics as afterwards. Notwithstanding this homely exterior, the intelligence, good sense, and good feeling expressed in his broad open brow and kindly smile, won confidence and sympathy at a glance. His ardent, dauntless spirit might be read in the steady unflinching glance of his piercing dark eye, which was never seen to quail for an instant in the presence of any earthly peril. His manners were frank and simple, but not wanting in a certain soldierly dignity.

Such was Victor Emmanuel of Savoy in his twenty-second year, when he began to pay court to his fair cousin, Maria Adelaide, daughter of the Archduke Ranieri, Viceroy of Lombardy-Venice. The mother of the princess was the only and beloved sister of Charles Albert, and the frequent intercourse of the families led to an intimacy between the young people. Victor's cousinly affection quickly grew into love, and he did not fail to inspire in Adelaide a corresponding sentiment, which, if less ardent, proved more constant than his. The only possible objection to an alliance with the archduchess was her Austrian birth ; it was a strong



one to Charles Albert at that moment, and would make the marriage very unpopular in Piedmont. But as she was Italian and Sabaud on her mother's side, the king overcame the difficulty, and yielded to the wishes of his son.

The marriage took place in 1842, when the duke was twenty-two years old, and his bride nineteen. King Charles Albert celebrated the event with all sorts of fêtes, and among other diversions was the novel one of a tournament, not so strange at the Savoy court as it would have been elsewhere, for in no other country have old chivalric customs and ideas lingered so long as in the Sardinian states.

The people looked coldly on these festivities, disapproving of the marriage, as a new tie to bind their sovereign to Austrian interests. In a very short time, however, the charming qualities of the Princess Adelaide completely gained the hearts of the Piedmontese, and the manly loyalty of this brave people won the affection of the princess, who had cast in her lot with them for weal or woe. She must have imbibed from her mother some of the sentiment of Italian nationality; and even if it were not so, the gentle young wife could not have resisted the overwhelming influence of a husband to whom she was so deeply attached. *His* soul was so permeated with the idea of national independence that she could hardly love Victor without loving Italy.

The Princess Adelaide was very pious; but neither the Austrians nor the Jesuits were able to make use

of her influence to the prejudice of Italian interests. When it came to a question of war between her husband and father it nearly broke her heart ; but she was still true to Victor and to Italy. A Neapolitan gentleman records that just before the battle of Novara he was seated beside the Duchess of Savoy, who asked him the news of his country. He replied that they would denounce the armistice and appeal once more to arms. 'We also denounce the armistice. Fatal necessity !' said the princess, and her eyes filled with tears.

Maria Adelaide was a princess of boundless charity. She kept an exact register of the poor of the city ; she knew their names, occupations, maladies, etc., and sacrificed her time, and many luxuries of dress and jewels, to supply their wants. When her husband brought her a magnificent present, she said it was too handsome for her, the money would have done so much for her poor pensioners. 'She was a most excellent wife and mother,' says Ghiron, 'giving constant care to the education of her children, being herself their teacher, ever present at their studies, their recreations, their meals ; and in educating them she followed the principles of the House of Savoy, which requires its sons to be robust and courageous. We have the results in those two brave princes who exposed their lives on the field of battle like common soldiers ; in Prince Amadeus, who sustained such a bitter struggle on the throne from which he retired only when it was necessary to use force ; in Queen Maria Pia of Portugal, who threw herself into the waves to save her son ; in the Princess Clotilde,

who proclaimed the incontestable truth that "Fear and Savoy had never yet met."

The friends of Victor Emmanuel assert that he was a loving husband, and deeply attached to his sweet young queen, whose noble qualities he fully appreciated. His enemies, on the other hand, pronounce him a brute, a monster, a demon, who broke the heart of his saintly wife and brought her to an early grave. Neither of these stories is strictly true, but the least false is that told by the Liberal party. It is true that he was very fond of and kind to his wife, and that he retained her affection to the latest hour of her existence. She died of an acute disease, not of a broken heart ; but that he was guilty of certain gallantries during her lifetime, which must have caused her deep pain, is equally true. We do not mean to chalk over the spots on our hero's fame. He had his faults, but they were redeemed by many noble qualities.

## CHAPTER III.

THE YOUNG SOLDIER. A.D. 1848.

THE Duke of Savoy, as we have said, was liberal to the heart's core, and hailed with intense joy his father's adoption of the national cause. When the news arrived of the rising of Milan on March 18, 1848, and the famous Five Days that followed, ending in the expulsion of the Austrians, Turin was convulsed with joyful excitement, and the citizens crowded in the piazzas, demanding arms from the government to go to the aid of their Lombard brothers. The king and princes were deeply agitated; though war was pending, they did not expect such a sudden explosion. A Cabinet council was held, and orders were given that the military were to be put in motion as soon as possible to cross the Ticino. Another council was held to make the necessary military appointments. The prince was not present at the council, and though he was burning to flesh his maiden sword in Austrian breasts, did not know but the government might forbid his going to the seat of war. Count Cesar Balbo, the historian, was then at the head of affairs; and as he was returning home from the council he was conscious of some one following his

steps. At last he turned round and faced a gentleman wrapped in a mantle so as to disguise his face.

‘What do you want of me?’ he asked.

‘Don’t you recognise me?’ asked a well-known voice, and the prince threw back his mantle. ‘I am come to pray you not to forget me when forming the divisions of the army that is to cross the Ticino.’ Then he said in a voice of concentrated, intense anxiety, ‘Am I to have a command? I entreat you, speak to my father immediately.’

Count Balbo replied, ‘It is the intention of his majesty to give you a command. Be tranquil; the Duke of Savoy could not be, and has not been forgotten.’

Victor caught his hand and pressed it warmly; then wrapped himself in his mantle, and bounded away joyously.

‘During the campaign the young general comported himself valorously,’ says Massari. ‘Without using a profusion of words, it is enough to say that under the canvas or in the battlefield he showed himself worthy of his race. He who knows the story of the Savoy dynasty knows that there is no higher eulogium than this.’

Apart from the sentiments of patriotism which he felt so strongly, the danger of war had as romantic a fascination for Victor Emmanuel as for any young knight of mediæval days. In the hunting excursions amidst Alpine snows and glaciers he was famous for the reckless daring of his wild exploits, in which he

seemed to court danger for its own sake. When he first heard the rattle of musketry and booming of cannon on the battle-field, and knew the enemy was in front of him, he cried out, 'Ah, *this* is the music that pleases me!'

His first taste of war was at Santa Lucia, May 6, where he gallantly led his brigade, and behaved so well that he was awarded a silver medal for valour. Those who have seen Victor Emmanuel on his war-horse in moments of danger say that there was something soul-stirring in his aspect. He looked such a perfect soldier, and displayed such a reckless gallantry in his impetuous charges, that he inspired the wildest enthusiasm in the troops. He was a good general in every respect. He guarded against surprises, looked after the comforts of his men, particularly the sick and wounded, and bore any amount of fatigue and hardship uncomplainingly.

At Goito, however, the experienced Austrians outwitted the Piedmontese, coming upon them at a moment when they were weary after a long march, and had laid down their arms to prepare themselves some refreshments. The prince, who was just retiring to his tent when the firing began, sprang to the saddle and galloped to the spot. The Piedmontese, weary, hungry, and surprised unarmed, had not recovered their presence of mind, and were making but a feeble resistance to the fresh and vigorous Austrian troops. One regiment was beginning to break up, and give way, when the Duke of Savoy threw himself before the soldiers, and addressing them with that generous

indignation which makes men ashamed of weakness, forced them to turn and face the enemy. His own dauntless courage communicated itself to his followers, who contested the field most heroically.

An eye-witness, the Duke of Dino, thus describes the crisis :—

There was a moment when victory seemed to smile on the Austrians. Then I saw pass before me like a whirlwind a young general, his Arab horse covered with foam, his spurs stained with blood. The cavalier with eyes flashing fire, and moustache bristling on end, precipitated himself, sword in hand, towards a splendid regiment of the guards ; he pulled up opposite to it, and cried out, ' With me, guards, to save the honour of Savoy ! ' A general shout responded to the chivalrous invitation. The regiment put itself in motion instantly, and the fight was more desperate than ever. The Austrians paused, retreated ; received new reinforcements, and then returned to the attack. They were on the point of overpowering the guards, whose officers gave the greatest proof of valour. In the midst of the smoke and fire the young general appeared and disappeared from my sight like lightning. He galloped up and down the field, encouraging the soldiers with voice and gesture, and though wounded by a ball in the thigh, still stood firm in the fiercest struggle. At last General d'Arvillars ordered a light battery to advance. When this opened fire the Austrians paused, and became con-

fused, and then the Cuneo Brigade rushing into the combat, they soon sounded a retreat. I asked an officer who passed me, wounded, 'Who is that general who so courageously exposed his life?' 'The Duke of Savoy.'

'Viva Casa Savoya!' cried the Duke of Dino; 'the descendants of Emanuele Filiberto have not degenerated.'

While this desperate fight was going on, King Charles Albert, pale and immovable, sat on his horse like the statue of an ancient cavalier, giving his orders with a calm and stately dignity, as if he were on the parade. As the Duke of Savoy had just driven the Austrians from their last stand-point, and they were in full retreat, the king received a despatch, and turning to his officers, said: 'Gentlemen, Peschiera is ours. My son, the Duke of Genoa, gives me news of its surrender.' At that moment the crown prince rode up, with blood-stained garments and radiant face. 'Majesty,' he said, with a military salute, 'the battle of to-day shall be called the victory of Goito.' It was a proud and happy moment for the king and father, who had few such in his life, and whose feelings were all the more intense because of the habitual restraint in which he held them; a moment of delirious joy to the crown prince, and of true, deep-felt enthusiasm on the part of the army, who with acclamations long and loud saluted Charles Albert as the liberator of Italy.

'Viva l'Italia! Viva Carlo Alberto! Viva Vittorio!' were the cries that rang from regiment to regiment, then taken up, and repeated again and again,



throughout the camp. Victor Emmanuel was intoxicated with delight. The rare honour of a gold medal for valour was awarded to him ; but his wound was more precious still. It was, fortunately, not so serious as to disable him from active service, but enough to give him the delicious sensation of having shed his blood for Italy. He did not conceal his boyish delight in the fact, and said to his attendants, 'How the Duke of Genoa will envy me this !'

Alas ! it was a short-lived triumph. The glory of Goito was doomed ere long to be extinguished in blood and tears.

'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace,'

the causes of the disastrous issue of this campaign. It was meant to be a national war. Charles Albert believed, as many others did, that he was to lead an Italian, not a Piedmontese army, for the expulsion of the foreigner from Italian soil. The Romagna, Tuscany, Lombardy, Venice, and Naples had all declared their determination to unite in one great effort to liberate the whole country from Austrian oppression. The Pope had an army already in the field near Ferrara to combat Austrian aggression, the Lombards were actually in arms before the King of Sardinia had crossed the Ticino. He had said in his proclamation : 'I will do my best to further your just desires, aided by that Providence which has given to Italy a Pio Nono.' The Pope had proposed a league between the Italian princes for the protection of the peninsula, which he hoped would soon bring matters to a peaceful solution ; he

meant to go to Lombardy himself, and throw the weight of his spiritual authority into the scale of Italian independence, which—added to the united arms of all the principalities—would bring Austria to see the matter from a just and Christian point of view. There can be little doubt that the Pope was honestly patriotic in his intentions, though the republican writers will not acknowledge it, and invariably class him with the other princes who acted so false a part on this occasion. The other sovereigns declared themselves disposed to follow the lead of the good Pope in everything. They granted constitutions all round with a great flourish of trumpets, and loudly declared they shared the sentiments of their ‘beloved subjects,’ in their hatred of the foreign yoke. Ferdinand II.’s patriotic fire burned stronger than that of any other. ‘War with Austria,’ he said, was his soul’s desire. He had always ‘detested Austria.’ One can hardly take in the full depth of this man’s treachery without reading his long proclamation to his ‘most beloved people,’ on the occasion of the declaration of war, in which he says, ‘Our brothers await us on the field of honour, and we shall not fail them,’ and concludes with these words:—

Union, abnegation, firmness—and the independence of our beautiful Italy shall be accomplished. Let this be our only thought; so generous a passion silences all other less noble ones. Before long 24,000,000 Italians will have a country—a common and rich patrimony of glory, etc., etc.

The Grand Duke of Tuscany was not behind his royal brothers ; and it must be owned that they had all learned the language of the Nationalists admirably. Leopold's address to his soldiers is so short that we are tempted to quote it.

Soldiers!—The holy cause of the independence of Italy is to be decided now on the fields of Lombardy. Already the citizens of Milan have bought—with their blood, and by a heroism the like of which history offers few examples—their liberty. Already the Sardinian army moves to the field, led by its magnanimous king, under whose orders fight the royal princes. Sons of Italy, heirs of the glory of their ancestors, the Tuscans cannot, must not, remain in shameful ease at such a solemn moment. Fly then, unite yourselves to the valiant citizens who as volunteers are ranging themselves under our banner—fly to the succour of our Lombard brothers, etc., etc.

The little Dukes of Modena and Parma were drawn along in the wake of their powerful neighbours. They expressed great repentance for having yielded so long to Austrian domination—because they could not help it ; henceforth they should put themselves under the direction of his Holiness the Pope, the King of Sardinia, and the Grand Duke of Tuscany. *They* also made out a *statuto*, and swore to it ; and sent forth their little contingents to aid in the national war. The wildest enthusiasm prevailed in every part of Italy ; the great sacrifices that were made by the poor as well as the rich

attested the sincerity of the sentiment which burned in the breasts of all Italians who deserved to be called such. The young women who had no ornaments to give sold their abundant tresses to contribute to the expenses of the volunteers.

Led by their princes, blessed by the Pope, the people felt they were going to fight in the holiest of causes. 'And holy it was, because it was a war of independence,' says Farini.

Imprudent or no, it was holy. Holy, because a war of independence is always holy. A war of defence only is always legitimate, because to repulse and expel a foreign invader from our country is to defend our welfare, our honour, our sepulchres—all that a man holds dear and sacred, from the altar of God to the kiss of his beloved. And the foreigner is always a domineering tyrant. He cannot be other than a tyrant. Even his civilisation, his gentleness, his liberality are refinements of tyranny. Holy, then, was the war of independence; holy the enthusiasm that kindled in the population in the Roman State, in the spring of 1848; holy the gifts and the sacrifices that they made.<sup>1</sup>

But the glorious hopes of the Italian nation were

<sup>1</sup> *Lo Stato Romano dal 1815 al 1850*. The illustrious author, Luigi Carlo Farini, is a most trustworthy historian of the events in which he took an active and important part. He was a Moderate, high in favour with Pio Nono in the Pontiff's liberal days, and one of the few whose attachment to him seems to have survived his apostasy. His book has the additional interest to the English reader of being dedicated to William E. Gladstone.

blasted by the weakness and treachery of the sovereigns. The army of the King of Naples took as long to reach Lombardy as they would have taken to go to the Holy Land. They never went farther than Bologna, where the commander, Pepe, received an order to return to Naples with the troops. This he could not bring himself to do, so resigned his post to an inferior, who, in obedience to secret orders from the king, had undermined and thwarted him all through the march. The officers and men were filled with shame and grief; some deserted and volunteered in the Sardinian army, but most of them submitted to the authority of their superiors. One officer is said to have died, literally of grief, and it is certain that another committed suicide. The grand duke's army was similarly rendered useless by secret orders to hoodwink and delude the Sardinians with the false hope of aid.

The Lombards, who had begun the war with such heroism as was displayed in the Five Days' struggle, did not maintain the same noble bearing throughout; they were divided among themselves and failed to support the Piedmontese as the king had been led to expect. They and the Venetians spent the precious time in disputing as to what form of government they would have, while the Austrians were still in possession of Italian soil. The Mazzinians were busy haranguing against monarchies, and circulating libellous stories about the Savoy family, while that family were doing more than any other in Italy to defend the rights and liberties of the nation.

The Romans, on whom King Charles had been taught to rely much, were rendered almost useless by the extraordinary indecision of Pius IX., who, as soon as he had committed himself to a straightforward course of action, directly after stultified himself by some contradiction. Though he protested against Austrian outrages on the frontier, and sent troops to defend it, he did away with the effect of these proceedings by saying that he did not mean to make war. Radetsky knew how to avail himself of this weakness, and issued a proclamation saying that as the Holy Father had said repeatedly that he would not make war, he regarded the Roman soldiers as outlaws, and would shoot every man he found bearing arms; which he accordingly did. This naturally had a demoralising effect on the troops, and all the more because they were not allowed to cross the Po and meet the Austrians in honourable warfare. General Durando could not wring a consent from the Pontiff, and he found himself in the position of making war on his own account, till at last the fear of a popular rising in Rome obliged the Pope to put his troops under the command of Charles Albert. But the papal army was very much inferior in spirits and numbers then to what it had been when it marched out of Rome, and did not render very effectual aid in the contest.

Thus, in point of fact, if we except the volunteers, gallant little Piedmont was left alone to fight the battle of Italian independence. Marshal Radetsky, having made short work of the papal troops at Vicenza, collected his forces, and concentrated them on the point where he

could most easily come upon the Sardinian army, small in numbers, exhausted by heat, fatigue, and fevers. The first reverse they had was at Sommacompagna, the royal family not being present at the engagement. They hastened forward and encountered the enemy at Staffola, and attacked them with such vigour that they drove them from the field, taking 2,000 prisoners, arms, colours, etc. Victor Emmanuel was the leading spirit of this battle. For the past two months, during which the army had suffered much from fever and other causes, the prince, by his admirable discipline, the kindly interest he took in the men, and the soldier-like manner in which he shared their hardships, had endeared himself more and more to them.

The victory of Staffalo was won under great difficulties ; a wasted army, encamped in a low, hot plain, under a burning July sun, was not equal to another such effort. But on the morrow the Piedmontese were called to defend themselves from a fresh attack, and they did it gallantly, desperately, but all in vain. The Austrian officers bore testimony to the valour of the Duke of Savoy and his brother, who led their men again and again to the assault, and were finally driven back only when all hope was over. This battle, fought at Custozza, near Villafranca, left the Italian army almost crushed, morally and physically.

Charles Albert was advised to retreat across the Po, and fortify himself in Piacenza. But the evil genius which had presided over all his public acts did not forsake him now. His generous disposition led him to neglect

this prudent counsel, and betake himself to the aid of Milan. Azeglio said :—

Since Lombardy and Venice will not unite, I told the king that his duty, the good of Italy, the welfare of the cause, required that he should retreat to Piedmont and defend it, where he could preserve an Italian army for a better occasion. Another defeat will render this occasion hopeless for centuries ; and with one sole army we should not risk it.

But Charles Albert did risk it ; he threw himself into Milan. Badly provisioned and badly defended against a powerful victorious army, the struggle became hopeless, and he capitulated. It was then that the Milanese populace effaced the glory of the Five Days by their cruel ingratitude to the too-generous king, who had all but sacrificed his own state to protect them. Goaded by the Mazzinians, they cried out that he was a traitor, and might have taken his life if he had not escaped from the city before his sons had come to his rescue.

The populace of Milan were saved from the infamy of personal outrage towards the king by the daring feat of a young Piedmontese captain, who with a few followers came under his balcony at midnight, and carried him off out of the city. This young officer had already given evidence of the noblest gifts of heart and mind, and he was destined in the future to win immortal honour for the Italian arms, and cover with new glory the ancient name of La Marmora.

The unhappy Charles Albert, whose destiny it was



still to be misunderstood, recrossed the Ticino with the firm intention of resuming the war. The advice of England and France was strongly against a renewal of the contest, as was that of many brave, wise men in Italy. But the heedless people demanded it, and called everyone a traitor who opposed it ; and the poor king, feeling his honour and the honour of Piedmont to be at stake, went almost without hope to his doom.

On March 20, 1849, the war was renewed, and was ended in three days by the utter overthrow of the Italian arms at Novara, a defeat which postponed the work of independence for ten years. The Piedmontese army as well as the king, expected defeat, for they were utterly broken in spirits and health. Even the sanguine, high-spirited Victor Emmanuel went sadly with clouded brow to this last campaign. 'We were unfortunate,' said he to a friend, 'but we were also betrayed by many persons.' The prince probably meant the secret adherents of Austria ; but the republicans helped largely to ruin the national cause for the time. The one conspicuous person who was openly false to his duty, and who suffered the just punishment of his treachery, was General Ramorino. He was ordered to hold the passage of the Po against the Austrian army, while the king was collecting his forces at Magenta. He left the passage open, the enemy passed into the country, and cut off the Piedmontese from their basis of operations.

At Spazsesca the Italians met with a success, but at Martara the great body of the Austrian army was concentrated ; and there General Durando and the Duke

of Savoy encountered them, and after a long-contested, bloody battle, were utterly defeated. The Italians and Austrians fought through the streets of Martara after night fell, and committed fearful havoc not only on one another but the unfortunate citizens. General Durando fought his way inch by inch out of the town, and joined the Duke of Savoy and La Marmora, who were trying to collect together the miserable remains of the army. The divisions of Durando and the prince, which had been the flower of the army, were no longer in existence. With heart oppressed by grief, Victor set out for his father's quarters, where the fatal news had preceded him.

Charles Albert had received his son with sedate composure when he rushed up to him with the cry of victory on his lips; but now his paternal heart was moved by the young man's misfortune. He embraced him with emotion, and told him that he knew he had comported himself as became a son of the Savoy family.

The king never raised his head after this; he knew he must be defeated in the last great encounter, and was resolved to seek death. Throughout the march to Novara his aide-de-camp heard him murmur broken-hearted words, unconscious that anyone was listening. '*C'est tout fini pour moi*,' he said repeatedly.

March 23 was the fatal day which extinguished for so many years all hope of Italian independence. The morning broke gloomily in a drizzling rain, and soon came to a downpour which lasted all day, mingling

with the streams of blood, which, hopeless though they knew it was, the Italians did not shrink from pouring out like water. To die in vain, seemed to the king and his brave followers all that was left for them to do. We have heard innumerable touching stories of individual heroism displayed on the field of Novara, and these were only in keeping with the general conduct of the whole army. Radetsky said the Piedmontese 'fought like devils,' and there were moments when he feared that he must give way before them.

General Perron, heading a desperate assault, had his skull broken. He begged the men who supported him to lay him at the king's feet, and with his last convulsive breath he said, 'Sire, I offered to you and my country the last days of my life. My duty is accomplished.'

A captain of artillery having an arm shot off, never left his post, but rallied his men and rushed again to the assault.

A young boy pointing a cannon had his hand taken away. His father seeing him look pale asked him was he wounded. He raised the bleeding stump, and cried, *Viva il Rè!* This heroic boy, Carlo di Robilante by name, is now Italian ambassador at Vienna.

Count Balbo had sent his five sons to the war, and all were engaged in this last combat; one of them fell by too strict obedience to his commander's orders.

These deeds of vain heroism only wrung the heart of the unhappy king, who, wherever he turned his haggard eyes, saw his brave people overwhelmed by

fresh reinforcements, falling thick and fast upon the field. He was fighting for more than life, for that without which life would be insupportable ; and seeing it hopeless, he sought in the thickest fire to meet the death for which he longed. But the balls passed him by as if by a miracle. Indeed the Savoy family seemed on that day to have charmed lives. The Duke of Genoa had three horses killed under him. The Duke of Savoy, having performed deeds of valour greater far than at the famous victory of Goito, covered the slow retreat of the Italian forces when night put a stop to the vain combat.

A flag of truce was sent to the Austrian camp to demand an armistice ; but the conditions offered by the Marshal were too dishonourable to accept, even then ; the first being the immediate expulsion of all Italian exiles from the state of Piedmont. It was only a few hours after the combat had ceased that the embassy returned with this reply. Charles Albert had previously notified to his generals that they were to meet him in council ; and when he had communicated to them the answer of Marshal Radetsky, he said, ‘Gentlemen, we cannot accept these conditions. Is it possible that we can resume hostilities ?’

All replied with one voice, ‘No.’

Then Charles Albert addressed his generals in the following pathetic words, his last speech as king :—

From eighteen years till now I have always made every effort possible for the benefit of the people. I am

deeply afflicted to see that my hopes have failed, not so much for my own sake, as for the country's. I have not been able to find death on the field of battle, as I had desired ; perhaps my existence is now the only obstacle to obtaining from the enemy reasonable terms. And since there remain no further means of continuing hostilities, I abdicate this moment, in favour of my son Vittorio, in the hope that, renewing negotiations with Radetsky, the new king may obtain better conditions, and procure for the country an advantageous peace. Behold your king !

The prince turned pale, and in an agitated voice tried to dissuade his father from the step he proposed, the Duke of Genoa and all present uniting with him. But in vain ; Charles Albert was resolute. He shook hands with his generals, and dismissed them, remaining alone with his sons. The princes were receiving his last advice and counsel, when the officers deputed to carry the message of the change of sovereigns to the Austrian camp presented themselves, saying they wanted more minute instructions from the king.

‘Certainly,’ said Charles Albert. ‘Victor, speak to those gentlemen, give them your instructions.’

At midnight the uncrowned king set out in a small carriage with one sole attendant, under the title of Count Barge, to seek an obscure home in the friendly state of Portugal. Charles Albert had warm devoted friends who would have followed him, had he permitted it, in poverty and exile to the ends of the earth. But he

chose to live in absolute privacy in Oporto, where he tried in vain to forget the dream of his life, the glorious dream of being the liberator and uniter of Italy. All that now remained to him for the few short months of his existence was to watch, from a distant shore, his Victor, all unaided, bravely buffeting the waves of adverse fortune, under which he himself had sunk exhausted.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE HONEST KING. A.D. 1849.

‘PER DIO, Italia sarà!’ cried Prince Victor, shaking his sword in the direction of the Austrians, as he followed in the rear of his shattered army at Novara. It seemed a mad boast at that moment, and doubtless would have made Marshal Radetsky smile, had he heard it; yet, insuperable as the obstacles seemed to be, he lived to overcome them all, and fulfil his vow.

His first taste of sovereign power was bitter; a more miserable inheritance could hardly have been handed from father to son than that which he received on the evening of the fatal day which seemed to have extinguished the last hope of Italian liberty. ‘I did not desire to be king,’ he said a short time after to Sir Ralph Abercrombie, and there is every reason to believe that he spoke sincerely. ‘I have no taste for the profession, which seems to me a miserable one, and in the present day very difficult.’

It was indeed a gloomy prospect. Surrounded by enemies in all the Italian princes, forsaken by the Pope, Lombardy and Venice crushed, the Jesuits and Mazzinians working to their utmost for the destruction of his

dynasty, England and France looking on in strict neutrality, he stood alone in presence of a powerful and victorious army, which threatened his little state with annihilation. But he manfully took up the broken sceptre which had fallen from his father's grasp, and nerved himself to encounter the terrible difficulties that beset his way.

The first thing to be done was to arrange an armistice, so as to give time to consider a treaty of peace. Marshal Radetsky requested a personal interview with the king, hoping to win him by threats and bribes to abandon the Liberal cause. He was young and inexperienced, had not yet sworn to the constitution, and perhaps had suffered enough to show him the folly of adhering to so hopeless a cause as popular government in Italy. If he could be brought to exchange his new-fangled ideas for the good old despotic rule of the House of Savoy, then Austria would be his friend and ally, and hold him on the throne in spite of a rebellious and discontented people.

But the young king was faithful to his subjects and to his principles. He knew how to resist the cunning old general's threats and blandishments alike. 'Marshal,' said he with a fierce energy, 'sooner than subscribe to such conditions I would lose a hundred crowns. What my father has sworn I will maintain. If you wish a war to the death, be it so! I will call my nation to arms once more, and you will see what Piedmont is capable of in a general rising. If I must fall, it shall be without shame. My house knows the road of exile, but not of dishonour.'



The manly firmness of the loyal-hearted king in his misfortune stirred a little sympathy in the grizzled old soldier who was trying to stamp his principles and his nation out of existence. At least, he always professed an admiration and esteem for Victor Emmanuel, and spoke of him as a 'noble fellow.'

On March 26, 1849, the armistice was concluded. The King of Sardinia was to break up all the military corps composed of Lombards, Poles, Hungarians, etc., retaining only the few who chose to remain his subjects for ever ; a heavy war indemnity was to be paid to Austria ; and meantime the troops were to occupy Piedmontese territory between the Po, the Sesia, and the Ticino ; half the fortress of Alessandria was to be given up to the foreign army.

These were the best terms that King Victor Emmanuel could wring from the conquerors ; and though something was ceded in compliment to him personally, they were hard conditions. A writer who saw him come away from this trying interview thus describes him :—

Victor Emmanuel II. passed at a gallop, followed by his staff officers, in the midst of the serried battalions ; but in that rapid glance his appearance was impressed on the mind of everyone who saw him. His countenance was grave, severe, firm, his gaze fixed before him as of one who reflects deeply ; in it we noted the resoluteness of a strong soul, that accepts events, but dares not sink under them. In the expression of his

face there was dignity mingled with a noble, proud grief—the grief of a son, citizen, and king.<sup>1</sup>

Marshal Radetsky wanted to make a great display of military homage to the king, and had ordered that all the Austrian troops on the road to Turin were to turn out to do him honour. Victor Emmanuel absolutely refused to permit it, as he wished to return to his capital in the most private manner.

When a prince leads forth an army amidst the acclamations of the citizens to expected victory, and returns defeated, with a shattered remnant of that army, what welcome does he look for from his countrymen? If he has read history to any purpose, he may know that a leader who comes back alive under these circumstances must be made a scapegoat. The ‘many-headed monster’ called the People, who at times have as little generosity as reason or gratitude, but an immense amount of vanity, cannot conceive how *their* army could be defeated by any just means. Nothing but treason or gross mismanagement on the part of the commander could account for the humiliating fact. So they make him a scapegoat.

The republican element, which had ruined the national cause in Lombardy and Venice, had not been without effect in Piedmont. Slandorous insinuations had been set afloat about Victor Emmanuel as well as his father, so that the news of the overthrow of the Italian army set Turin in a flame of anger against the prince,

<sup>1</sup> Bersezio, *I Contemporanei Italiani*.

who had a large share in the conduct of affairs. Of course it was for the most part the *basso popolo* who felt so. The sober-minded, well-informed citizens knew enough of the difficulties of the war question to understand how the Italian army, with all its courage and enthusiasm, could be defeated. Yet even the minds of the better classes were influenced by false reports.

Victor Emmanuel on his way to the capital received a private letter from the queen consort, acquainting him with the state of public feeling, and begging him to enter Turin privately. He did so; and the day after issued a proclamation, and received the oath of the troops. The queen assisted at the ceremony in a carriage, accompanied by the two children Humbert and Amadeus, the one five and the other four years old. The royal party were received with the coldest courtesy by the citizens. Not a cheer welcomed the unfortunate prince to the throne of his ancestors, except what was given by his faithful soldiers who had followed him through the war. The king was deeply wounded by the injustice and ingratitude of his people, and, naturally, his wife felt with him. They went home miserable and disconsolate.

The royal proclamation was to the following effect :—

Citizens,—Untoward events and the will of my most venerated parent have called me, long before my time, to the throne of my ancestors. The circumstances under which I hold the reins of government

are such that nothing but the most perfect concord in all will enable me, and then with difficulty, to fulfil my only desire, the salvation of our common country. The destinies of nations are matured in the designs of Providence, but man owes to his country all the service he is capable of, and in this debt we have not failed. Now all our efforts must be to maintain our honour untarnished, to heal the wounds of our country, to consolidate our constitutional institutions. To this undertaking I conjure all my people, to it I will pledge myself by a solemn oath, and I await from the nation the exchange of help, affection, and confidence.

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

The proclamation was not countersigned by any minister; but his adviser was Cadorna, whom he had empowered to form a ministry on the resignation of the late one.

On the evening of March 27 the new ministers presented themselves to the Chamber of Deputies, to make known the terms of the armistice which had been agreed to on the 24th, that is, the day after the battle. At 8 o'clock the Chamber was opened, and the house was crowded to excess by an anxious, agitated assembly. The Minister of the Interior, Pinelli, rose to read the articles of the capitulation. His face was pale with suppressed emotion as he looked round at his hearers and began the humiliating recital. He was listened to in gloomy silence till he came to the third article, which provided that the Austrian troops, 18,000 infantry and

2,000 cavalry, were to occupy Piedmontese territory and part of the fort of Alessandria. Then there was a general burst of indignation, and a cry against the Austrians and the traitors. 'It is an infamy,' was shouted from the benches of the deputies and the galleries simultaneously. The tumult lasted for some minutes, and it was some time before the minister could resume his reading, which he was hardly able to do because of his own agitation and that of his hearers. He was interrupted by fierce exclamations at every article, which came to a climax when it was stipulated that the Sardinian fleet should be removed from the Adriatic, and brought into the Ligurian ports within fifteen days.

The minister felt it his duty to add that these conditions would have been much heavier if the earnest insistence of the king had not obtained considerable modifications.

When the ministers betook themselves to the palace, they found the king waiting in intense anxiety to hear how the armistice had been received, and they described the scene in the Chamber. He had borne up bravely throughout the miserable week, but when he knew the Parliament was hostile to him his spirits gave way. The suppressed grief of the past five days found vent in tears and sobs, as he repeated again and again that he had nothing to reproach himself with; he had done his utmost for the country, and that was his only consolation.

Next day a deputation from the Chamber of Deputies waited on the king, and addressed him in terms of

respectful remonstrance, as though their sovereign held their liberty in the hollow of his hand, and had but to issue an order and they would immediately be rid of the incubus of Austrian occupation. The deputation, after bitterly lamenting the grievous state of things, hoped that their monarch would follow the example of his magnanimous predecessor, who was a firm upholder of the Italian cause. The king was put on his defence, and, though very much agitated, he did defend himself boldly and ably. He began by saying that he wished to be, like his father, an upholder of Italian independence, and he had already given some proofs of his fidelity to the cause. He then related the story of the disastrous campaign from beginning to end. The deputation was impressed by the narration from the lips of the king, whose truth they could not doubt, and they reported the facts to the assembly.

Next day, the 29th, the king took the oath to the constitution. As he was ascending the stairs of the palace, on his way to the Chamber, he narrowly escaped a sudden death. An enormous beam fell from the roof close to him, striking the epaulet of the gentleman beside him, Menaprea, who was horrified at the danger; but the king did not give it the least attention. 'Come on, we have other things to think of,' he said to his minister, and moved forward without a moment's delay.

The senators, deputies, and spectators were very numerous. Victor Emmanuel, dressed in military uniform, took his seat upon the throne, while the Keeper of the Seals announced the Chambers opened. When the

formula of the royal oath, which is the twenty-second article of the famous *Statuto*,<sup>1</sup> for which his father had suffered so much, was presented, the king stood up, uncovered his head, and after casting a significant glance around the assembly, spoke in a loud, sonorous voice :—

In the presence of God, I swear to observe loyally the *Statuto* : not to exercise the royal authority but in virtue of the laws and in conformity with them ; to see that full justice is rendered to everyone according to his rights ; to comport myself in all things with the sole view of the interest, the prosperity, and honour of the nation.

He placed his signature to the document, reseated himself on the throne, and said :—

In assuming the government of the state in the present circumstances, of which I more than any other feel the weight and bitterness, I have already expressed to the nation what my intentions are. The consolidation of our constitutional institutions, the welfare and honour of our common country, form the constant subject of my thoughts, and I trust I shall be able to accomplish them with the aid of Providence and your accordance. In taking this solemn oath, I am profoundly sensible of the gravity of my duties, which must shorten my life.

In returning from the legislative assembly, Victor

<sup>1</sup> For particulars of the Sardinian Constitution, now that of all Italy, see *Monarchia Rappresentativa in Italia*, by Count Cesar Balbo.

Emmanuel had recovered his usual composure. The agitation of his mind was calmed by the grandeur of the oath and the consciousness that he meant to maintain it at any cost. It was only a week since the battle of Novara, yet he had lived through so many important scenes and events in that time, that the Duke of Savoy seemed quite a different person from the King Victor Emmanuel II.

The new ministry was formed by General Delaunay, who chose for one of his colleagues Gioberti, who had been in the Cabinet of Charles Albert. Signor Nigra, a rich banker, much esteemed for his spotless probity, consented, from pure devotion to the king and country, to be Minister of Finance, at a moment when the treasury was empty and the nation reduced to a state of penury.

The first thing the king and his ministers agreed upon was to dissolve the Parliament and have a general election. It was an unpractical and scatter-brained assembly, elected on the war-cry, when no candidate would have had a chance who was not 'sound' on that question; when such men as Camillo Cavour were rejected, and sometimes denounced as traitors, because they were opposed to it. It was, in fact, an impossible Parliament to do sober, sad work with, for it could not be persuaded to accept the inevitable consequences of defeat. The Chambers were dissolved on the 30th, and the day for the general election was not named, because the government thought it well to give time for turbulent passions to calm down, while the peace negotiations were going forward.



These negotiations were prolonged into the summer, and seemed never likely to come to a peaceful solution. The King of Sardinia had recourse to the friendly powers of France and England to use their influence on his behalf. In a private conversation with the respective ambassadors of these states, Victor Emmanuel spoke to the following effect :—

I have done my duty as a soldier, and now I will serve my country in another way, because I love her sincerely. I will tell you the truth always, and I wish my ministers to do the same. If we think it necessary to follow a line of conduct, once it is adopted, I will say so frankly. This shall always be my policy, internal and external. As to you, gentlemen, you can tell your governments that I desire peace, frankly, loyally, without any ambitious second ends. Say, also, to Marshal Radetsky that I am willing to follow the armistice, or even to modify it in the interest of peace. I do not pretend to elude the fulfilment of the conditions I have signed. I shall be very grateful to you for what you do for us ; be sure I shall never compromise you, for I never fail in my word.

The city of Genoa had been the seat of republican intrigues in 1848, and after the overthrow of the royal army in 1849 the people, incited by some unprincipled demagogues, broke into open anarchy. General Alfonso la Marmora was sent to restore order to the distracted city, and he fulfilled his mission with ability and discretion. He was, however, obliged to hold it in a state of

siege for some time. An amnesty was granted to the insurgents, with a few exceptions; and amongst those few was the Marchese Pareto, formerly Minister of Foreign Affairs in Charles Albert's reign. His case was a bad one; but when the paper was presented to the king, he said,—

‘I do not wish this exception made. I will not have it said that I have used rigour towards a man who was once my father's minister.’

The ministry soon broke up, divided on the peace question, and Delaunay resigned; on this the king thought of Massimo Azeglio, who, still suffering from the wound received at Vicenza, and deeply afflicted in spirit was wandering up and down the Riviera. If Victor Emmanuel did not like the ‘profession of king,’ Azeglio liked that of minister quite as little. The king's message found him at Genoa, and it was earnestly backed up by his brother Roberto, Marchese d'Azeglio, and one of the ministers, who came to his room early in the morning, before he was out of bed, and entreated him to accept the difficult charge. He could not refuse, though the office was most distasteful to him. On May 10, he sent forth an address to his constituents confirming what the king had already said. ‘The misfortunes, the errors of the past, render war impossible,’ said he; ‘but for the nation, for the king, for us, we proclaim it in the face of the world, dishonour is quite as impossible.’

The king was much pleased with his new minister; their political opinions exactly coincided; they both had

a large fund of good sense and keen observation, as well as an uncompromising candour and honesty of character ; and though Victor Emmanuel was not a polished man of letters, he could appreciate Azeglio's varied talents and charming manners. He made him his friend and confidant ; and when Azeglio's wound obliged him to lie on a sofa all day, used to go to see him, and talk over affairs public and private.

Azeglio, being so much older than the king, and having had such a large experience of life, beside being nothing of a courtier, gave his opinions and advice with unusual frankness.

One day talking alone with his sovereign, he said :—

‘ There have been so few honest kings in the world, that it would be a grand thing to begin the series.’

And Victor, looking at him with a smile, asked,—

‘ Have I to play the part of honest king ? ’

‘ Your majesty has sworn to the *Statuto*, and has thought of all Italy, and not of Piedmont only. Let us continue in this path, and hold always that a king, as well as an obscure individual, has one word only, and by that he must stand.’

‘ Well, in that case,’ replied the monarch, ‘ the profession seems easy to me.’

‘ And the *Rè galantuomo*, we have him,’ concluded the minister.

His majesty was pleased with the title, and proud of it. When the register of the census of Turin was brought, and he was asked to sign his name, he wrote, under the head ‘ Profession,’ ‘ *Rè galantuomo*.’

## CHAPTER V.

PIO NONO AND THE PAPAL POWER. A.D. 1848-49.

THERE were no people in Italy in whom the feeling of nationality was stronger, or the desire for a change of government so intense, as the Romagnuoli. And indeed when one reads the history of modern Rome, the wonder is how a brave, high-spirited people could have submitted so long to the papal government. They did not submit very patiently, it is true, for they were much given to conspire and rebel; but these conspiracies and rebellions were nipped in the bud by a system of espionage and terrorism quite unique—a system in which were united the temporal and spiritual powers. Anyone suspected of liberal thought in religion or politics was hunted down, not so much by means of the police as by means of the priests. The confessional was a ready way of obtaining the secrets of every family; and the aged or dying persons were refused absolution unless they betrayed the haunts of their suspected friends and relations. The information thus obtained was grossly abused, and men were dragged before the Inquisition, tortured and imprisoned on the pretext of heresy, who were perfectly orthodox, and desired

nothing but some reform in the administration of justice.

The immediate predecessors of Pius IX. were so detestable, that they made him appear, by force of contrast, an angel from heaven. His benevolent disposition, the purity of his private life, and the reforms with which he began his reign—for he too granted a representative form of government—raised the wildest hopes in the hearts of the people; they persuaded, caressed, and adored him to such an extent that he was carried along on the wave of popularity, and landed in Liberalism before he knew what he was about. But suddenly he awoke as if from a delirium, and finding he had drifted unconsciously away from the fixed principles of the papacy, tried to get back as best he could.

He had initiated the reform movement before Charles Albert had dared to unfurl the tricolour; but before that unfortunate monarch had well entered into the desperate struggle, Pius IX. was beginning to recover from the liberal fever; he was quarrelling with his ministers, contradicting his own utterances, sending orders to his generals not to fight, and trying every means to avoid a rupture with Austria—Austria who all the time hated him as a demon of revolution, and had the clergy preaching against him and threatening a schism. This was what he feared; and though not devoid of courage and patriotism, the *priest* was stronger in him than the *citizen*. Still some reforms from time to time he granted, and he had fresh accesses of

Liberalism when Austrian aggression made him feel for the moment like a man and an Italian. His subjects, who were truly attached to him, prostrated themselves at his feet, and implored permission to fight his enemies—to defend the sacred confines of the Church's States. They offered money, arms, jewels—all they possessed—if he would only give them the blessed privilege of dying in his cause, and let that cause and Italy's be one. He was touched by the pathetic appeal, and seemed to yield for the time. He would bless them and their banner, and write an indignant protest to the Austrian general against outrages in Ferrara, or brutalities in Bologna; and then his patient subjects would thank him with an excess of gratitude, for having protested against the violation of his own territories.

The Romans were all the time burning to take their part in the national war into which they had helped to drive Charles Albert. He had said :—

I will do my best to further your just desires, aided by that Providence which has given to Italy a Pio Nono—that Providence which is visibly with us, and has given Italy strength to stand alone.

They thought it would be an everlasting disgrace if Piedmont and Lombardy were left to fight the battle of liberty all unaided, after having been misled by so many promises; and there were those who felt such generous shame at the idea, that they did not wait for any permission, but volunteered under the banner of the King of Sardinia.

The wildest joy pervaded the city of Rome when the first Piedmontese successes were announced, but the defeat of Custozza threw her into mourning. The deputies of the Consulta—a sort of parliament which the Pope had instituted—framed an address to the sovereign in the most passionate language of entreaty, concluding thus:—

We wish to save the state from the discord and horrid turmoil by which she is threatened, and we cannot do so unless we direct to a good end the extraordinary popular enthusiasm, and unless you uphold us with your authority. Listen, O blessed Father, to the sorrowful cry of your devoted children! Oh, do not *will* that in the reign of Pio Nono a great disaster to the Italian arms should weigh down our consciences with remorse!

The Pope still hesitated; he wanted time to consider, he said. The citizens became desperate. Time! they exclaimed, time! while their Piedmontese and Lombard brothers were pouring out their best blood! while Italy was being assassinated!

Even the priests—many of them, at least—shared the popular enthusiasm. They harangued the people, blessed the banners, and offered to march north with the army. Amongst these warlike priests was the Barnabite *frate*, Gavazzi, a very eloquent, but a turbulent and injudicious preacher, who subsequently left the Church of Rome. When General Durando, accompanied by Massimo Azeglio, at last marched to the seat of war,

he was not permitted to cross the Po, and the discontent at this inactivity of the papal government was increased by various other incidents. Gioberti had just issued his book against the Jesuits, who were detested in Rome as the deadly enemies of liberty, and the Romans received the work with unmeasured praise.

The Pope grew angry, and accused everyone of ingratitude; the people insulted the Jesuits and forced them to leave Rome, threatened to burn cardinals' palaces, crying, 'Live Pio Nono *alone*! Death to Lambraschini!' The Pope grew more angry; he went about guarded, and showed a want of confidence in the citizens, even alluding to the national aspirations as 'insane hopes.' All this time a continual change of ministers went on, as liberal or clerical counsels prevailed, or rather as the pressure of the popular will was brought to bear upon the sovereign. The people were becoming more violent and unreasonable in their demands, and the Pope was gradually receding from the position of reformer, frightened of schism and anarchy. The breach was widening rapidly, and the people, under the pernicious influence of violent demagogues, had been worked into the worst frame of mind, when Pellegrino Rossi came into office. He was an excellent man, and an able statesman; but he pleased nobody, because he courted neither clergy nor people, but set about his duty with a stern resolve to put down riotous disorder in the city, and corrupt practices in high places. His brutal murder, which is an everlasting disgrace to the people of Rome, gave Pio Nono a great shock, and threw him back into



the arms of the retrograde party. He was bitterly disappointed and grieved to find that the Utopia of his poetic imagination was but an impossible dream. Disaffection daily increased, and the Romans began to regard their once adored Pontiff as a false, capricious, tyrannical ruler.

Azeglio had said truly when he wrote, 'The magic of Pio Nono will not last.' The fact is, that he never had been the phoenix they took him for at first, nor was he, even at his worst, a heartless tyrant, though the acts of his government might well cover his name with odium. He was weak and vacillating, and lent an ear now to the words of one party, now of another. The clerical party was the most powerful, and by the most cunning and artful means managed to inspire in him such a fear of anarchy and schism that he shrank from the simplest and most necessary reforms as dangerous. His great fault was an extravagant idea of his own self-importance. He believed in himself as Pope as firmly as he did in the Madonna; an offence against him was an offence against religion, and deserved the severest punishment. This will account for what sometimes seemed evidence of a vindictive nature, but was not really so. He never meant to deceive his subjects. They deceived themselves by imagining that the Pope was a man of such transcendent genius, force of character, and sublime virtue, that he could overturn and remodel at his will such a powerful institution as the Church government, the abuses and corruptions of which had their roots deep fixed in far-back ages.

When at last the mutinous citizens bombarded the Quirinal palace—the Pope being inside—he ceded, but with a protest. ‘I cede to force alone,’ he said; and in a few days he left Rome secretly by night, disguised as a common priest. November 25, 1848, Pio Nono abandoned his capital, a prey to contending parties, and took refuge with the King of Naples at Gaeta. It was a most unhappy choice, and cut off all hope of a reconciliation with his people. The liberal ministers, lately called to office by compulsion, established a provisional government, and sent a deputation to Gaeta to entreat his holiness to return to Rome. The deputation was stopped on the frontier by order of the King of Naples, and not allowed to approach the Pope.

Meanwhile, the Austrian Jesuits had come round him, and were doing their utmost to make the breach wider. In an evil hour he appealed to the Catholic powers for help against his subjects—an evil hour for him, Pio Nono, and the temporal power—not for Italy. He had left his capital without a leader, and one of his deadliest enemies, Garibaldi, had taken possession of it, and was disseminating his heretical views in a very fruitful soil, giving a republican bias to all the liberal movements. The reception the deputation met with broke the last tie between the Pope and his subjects.

Carlo Alberto was cut to the heart by the defection of Pio Nono from the Liberal cause. He was really his only ally, and he valued him more than all the other princes put together, because of his spiritual authority.

He tried repeatedly to reconcile the Romans and their sovereign, but in vain. On January 1, 1849, Conte di San Martino, envoy of the Sardinian king, arrived at Gaeta. The Pope refused to see him, though the king had given him no offence whatever. At last, after much trouble, he consented to receive him as a private individual. They talked of his return to Rome, and the count hinted at the advisability of conciliatory measures; but the Pope gave him to understand that he trusted entirely to foreign aid for his restoration. The count started and looked reproachfully at the Pope, who was himself a little disturbed. '*Che vuole?*' they would have it,' said he.

The Austrian and Bavarian ambassadors laboured incessantly to circumvent San Martino, but he remained for some time at Gaeta, and pleaded the cause of the Romans, which was the cause of Italy, with great earnestness. There were moments when the Pope's better nature was in the ascendant; and once he seemed moved by San Martino's arguments; but he said again, 'What would you have? It is too late,' and sighed.

It was doubtless a sigh from the depth of his soul, a sigh for his better self, the lost Pio Nono of 1846, beloved and revered as he never could be again. Perhaps at that moment a vision flashed across his mind of himself on the balcony of the Quirinal, with hands outstretched over thousands of upturned faces, all breathing love and trust, while he blessed the Italian cause, and they vowed fidelity to their pastor and king. And now he was about to let loose upon them a foreign soldiery; hence-

forth he must hold his throne by the sole force of arms. Well might Pio Nono sigh.<sup>1</sup>

King Ferdinand and the Austrian ambassador persuaded the Pope that nothing but Austrian intervention could reseat him on the throne. France and Spain, equally eager to get hold of him, were profuse in offers of services. Poor Count San Martino had no chance against such odds, but he spoke boldly nevertheless. Gioberti, once much admired by Pio Nono, was then Charles Albert's minister, and he addressed a letter to Gaeta on the subject of a reconciliation between the Pope and the Romans which concluded thus:—

I hope the Court of Gaeta is about to return to sentiments more evangelical, more worthy of Pio Nono.

I am sorry to have to say that the Court of Gaeta, repudiating the doctrine of conciliation, and adopting

<sup>1</sup> Early in 1848, the Pope had issued a proclamation blessing the Italian cause. Some misunderstandings had previously arisen between the Pontiff and citizens about the Civic Guard; but these differences having been accommodated for the moment, the proclamation was issued, and the people surrounded the Pope's carriage, holding up a placard with the words: '*Holy Father, confide in your people*'—and then followed him in great numbers to the Quirinal. He came on the balcony, and spoke, in the midst of a profound silence:—

'Before the benediction of God descends upon you, on the rest of my states, and—I repeat it once more—on *all Italy*, I pray you to be of one accord, and to maintain that faith which you have vowed to your Pontiff.'

The silence was broken by a tumultuous, agitated cry from the multitude: 'I swear.'

The Pope raised his hand to consecrate this solemn compact by calling God's blessing upon it.

Who broke faith—the Pope or the people? To be quite just, we should say neither party observed the compact, both feeling themselves justified in breaking it.

that of vengeance and blood, does not seem to know that it is repudiating the maxims of Christ, and putting in their stead those of Mahomet.

It is necessary to bear these events of Charles Albert's reign in mind, in order to judge fairly of the quarrel between his successor and the Holy See.

The respectable portion of the city of Rome thought they had done their duty in trying to make peace, and now, under the influence of Garibaldi and Mazzini, just then arrived, they felt inclined to use their liberty, and establish a different form of government. In February, 1849, a meeting of Parliament took place, in which it was resolved that Pope Pius IX. had fallen from the temporal power in fact and in right, but that his independence as Pontiff should be strictly guaranteed. Galletti, the late minister of Pio Nono, accepted office. The Romans inaugurated their republic with religious observances, for they were anxious to show that they adhered to the Christian faith, and that liberty did not mean atheism. Among the first measures of the new government was the abolition of the Holy Office of the Inquisition.

The populace would have levelled it with the ground, but the ministers decided to put the building to some charitable purpose; before making any alteration in it, they thought it well to leave it open for a few days, to let the citizens see with their own eyes the secret mechanism of the papal system. They did not need any evidence to know that the only crime of serious

moment in the States of the Church was liberal thought in religion and politics. That their friends and relations had been spirited away, and immured in prison, they also knew too well. And when the prison doors were open these emaciated heretics had a sad tale to tell of cruel suffering and ingenious torture, and that without any visible instruments, for these had been abolished by law in 1815. But worse than anything that had come to their knowledge was discovered in the dungeons, and in the archives where the criminal records were kept.<sup>1</sup>

The following account by one of the prisoners, a foreigner, will give an idea of the excitement of Rome at the opening of the Inquisition.

It was the 27th of March, 1849, near sunset, when a great tumult and rushing of feet at a rapid pace, and a noise of many voices made themselves heard in the corridor. Ignorant of what had happened, I did not know the cause of the noise, and thought my last hour was come, and throwing myself on my knees, I commended my soul to God. Then the door of my prison opened, and there entered a man of short stature, who fell upon my neck and embraced me, while tears fell abundantly from under his green spectacles. It was the minister Sterbini, author of the abolition of the Holy Office. 'You are free,' he said. I was excessively weak from long confinement in the narrow, damp prison, and had almost lost the power of walk-

<sup>1</sup> See Firentino, *La Vita di Pio Nono*.

ing. But the men who accompanied him took me by the arms and carried me across a court, through a crowd who cried, 'Down with the Pope!' 'Live the Republic!' I was put in a room with other prisoners, where the good people, so different from their priests, took great pains to restore me with soups, wine and cordials. When Sterbini had visited all the prisoners, he asked each where he would like to be sent. I replied that, being a foreigner, I had no friends in Rome, and prayed him to conduct me to the consul of my nation.

'You shall go to your consul,' he said, 'but not in your present state ; wait till you are a little recovered.' Then one of the gentlemen present entreated me to accept his hospitality, which I did with gratitude. I was put in a carriage and carried to the house of this good Roman, where I now am.

It was just three days after the battle of Novara, which plunged Rome and Italy in the deepest mourning. There were rejoicings at Gaeta when the news arrived, and Pio Nono showed his chameleon-like character in its worst aspect at this time. His old ally, Carlo Alberto, who was a devoted son of the Church, had been overpowered in a last desperate stand against his enemies. Lombardy was being trampled to death by Austrian dragoons, under a general at whose name humanity shudders.<sup>1</sup> Venice was still making a gallant but utterly hopeless defence against the enemy, having

<sup>1</sup> Haynau.

addressed the most touching appeals for help to the Holy Father, before his flight.

At the same time that the war was raging in the north of Italy, Naples was a prey to the same misfortune. The Two Sicilies were in open rebellion ; having decided to depose for ever the Bourbon race, they invited to the throne Ferdinand of Savoy, Charles Albert's younger son. But Piedmont could not spare one gallant arm from her service, much less a prince of the blood. Garibaldi, with 5,000 volunteers, lent able assistance to the Neapolitan insurgents, and defeated the royal troops repeatedly. He hastened back to defend Rome from the French, who, in answer to the Pope's appeal, had landed at Civitavecchia, April 1849. Though they came in friendly guise, promising to respect the liberties of the people, the Romans thought it well to prepare for defence, and the bells of the Capitol rang out calling the citizens to arms. On April 29 there were within the walls 9,000 soldiers ready for battle, in two divisions, one commanded by Garibaldi, the other by Bartolucci.

The gallant conduct of the Romans during the siege redeemed their character from the stain which their previous excesses and follies had left upon it. The best men came to the front in this moment of dire distress, while the citizens, aided by some northern volunteers, not only performed acts of great valour, but displayed a constancy and heroism worthy of ancient days. The siege lasted four months. Then, utterly worn out, the city capitulated, and General Oudinot entered



on July 3. The Pope sent him a warm letter of thanks, and benedictions for himself and his soldiers.

When he fled from Rome [says Guerazzi], with the locket of Pius VI. in his bosom, and the woman Spaur by his side, he never ceased to supplicate the Divine Redeemer for the health of his enemies—whom later he sent openly to the gallows.

The same author records the fact that at the time of the numerous trials for high treason which followed the Pope's restoration, he used to lay the death warrant at the foot of the cross, and when no heavenly inspiration or sign came from it, he ordered the sentence to be executed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L'Assedio di Roma.*

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE KING AND CONSTITUTION. A.D. 1849-50.

EARLY in May, a month after Victor Emmanuel had come to the throne, it was decided between him and his advisers to make one more effort to restore peace to the distracted peninsula by addressing an earnest appeal to the three exiled sovereigns at Gaeta, more particularly to the Pope, who would naturally have more influence than the others if he could be won over to a policy of conciliation.

The ambassador chosen for this delicate mission was Cesar Balbo, a man of superior intellect, great personal worth, and much public spirit. He was one of those rare men whom it was Victor Emmanuel's good fortune to find round him in his hour of bitterest trial—men whose truth and loyalty could not be doubted, for nothing but disinterested patriotism could bind them to *his* service at that moment. Count Balbo was Azeglio's cousin and very dear friend, and like him he felt that all personal feeling must give way before the public interests, so he accepted the mission.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Azeglio writes to his wife on March 28:—‘I have just heard that one of Balbo's sons is killed; I do not know which. Poor Balbo! He

The king had charged Count Balbo with reverent messages for the Pope, and told him to exhort him to re-establish a constitutional government in his states, send away the French, and conciliate his people. As the two other dispossessed sovereigns, the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the King of Naples, were also at Gaeta, the count was instructed to drop a word of advice to them also. The mission failed utterly, no one of the three giving any ear to the Sardinian envoy. But it is right to record every effort made by Victor Emmanuel's government to reconcile the Pope with the spirit of the nation. These attempts at establishing a good understanding are not usually mentioned by clerical writers, nor do they generally take much note of the proscriptions and executions which followed the Pope's restoration.

Victor Emmanuel had not been yet two months on the throne, when his life, which had already had so many hair-breadth escapes, was threatened by a dangerous illness, the same sort of fever which ultimately proved fatal. For nearly a month his family and friends were held in a state of suspense, hope and fear alternating as the fever abated or increased. It was a time of harrowing anxiety for those who understood the situation of affairs. His death at that moment would have been a calamity for the country which had no parallel. A

had five sons in the field, and it seems that our people contested that battle like lions. . . . Poor Balbo ! Noble heart ! While I write to you I am thinking of him, and that poor youth—I do not know which—but I loved them all, and I cannot restrain my tears.'

letter from General Dabormida, the king's aide-de-camp, to General La Marmora at Genoa, will explain the state of feeling at the time.

May 29, 1849.

Dearest Friend,—I delayed some days replying to your letter, hoping to have some good news about the king, and it is with a sad heart I must tell you that the disease does not draw to a favourable conclusion, but on the contrary increases, so as to put us in fear of his life. Ribere at first seemed confident of a favourable issue, but now he begins to be frightened, and the Prince Carignano, who sees the king often, yesterday was much afflicted. Grief perhaps makes us see the danger greater than it is, but the danger exists.

Just think, my friend, of the dreadful consequences of such a loss. How could we in these times sustain a regency which would last over thirteen years?<sup>1</sup> I shrink from the thought; and I fear more than ever that we are destined for some terrible crisis. Believe me, I do not grieve for the king as much as for the country. He would cease to suffer, and be spared the future miseries, which threaten to embitter his life, of party conflicts. You cannot imagine how much this poor young man suffers in seeing himself so villainously maligned in the journals, and threatened and insulted by anonymous letters. I have always believed his disposition good, but I never imagined him so excellent as since I have seen him groan

<sup>1</sup> The crown prince, Humbert, was five years old.

under the weight of undeserved calumnies, but never heard issue from his lips a single threat, a desire for revenge, or a word of hate. He is, I repeat, excellent and his death would be a great calamity to the country. I do not doubt that when the present troubles are passed his fine character will be appreciated, and he will be loved in the end. But before he arrives at that point, how much he has to suffer! If you were here I might relieve my heart to you, and I have much need to do so, because my friends who do not know the king well do not sympathize with my grief.

The queen is an angel; she never abandons her husband, and I fear that her health cannot hold out much longer under the fatigues of nurse-tending. The Duke of Genoa comes from the camp every day to visit the king and take his orders.

The duke, who filled the king's place with ability, was the most devoted of subjects. 'How good my brother is!' he said to General Dabormida, on coming out of the sick-room. 'Confess, General, that even you doubted Vittorio would have turned out so good?'

Happily for Italy Victor Emmanuel did not die; and General Dabormida's words, that he had much to suffer, but would conquer in the end, were fulfilled.

As soon as the king was recovered he issued a proclamation to the people. He thanked everyone for the trouble and anxiety they had had about him; said he was grateful to Providence for such a brother and friend as the Duke of Genoa; spoke with tender sadness

of his father, who 'had so loved Italy and her people, who had laboured and suffered so much for them, and now found himself in a distant land in infirm health ;' alluded to the peace still unsigned, saying it never should be, unless the terms were honourable and worthy of the nation.

While the king was ill, General Ramorino, who had assisted as much as was in him to the overthrow of the Italian arms, was tried by court-martial, and being found guilty of disobedience to his commander's orders, which was plainly tantamount to treason, was sentenced to be shot. He appealed to the royal clemency ; but the king being too ill to attend to the affair, his advisers felt that Ramorino was not a fit subject for grace, and the sentence was executed. Everything that the government did in those days was criticised and cavilled at. While the case was pending, Azeglio said to a friend with a bitter smile :—

Certain journals have their articles already prepared for each of the two hypotheses : if it be the first, they will leave the one and print the other ; and if the second, they will do the opposite. In both cases their aim will be reached, which is to put the ' traitor ' king and his ministers in the wrong.

The negotiations for peace dragged their weary length far into the summer, and seemed as if they never would come to a conclusion. The Sardinian government held out for an amnesty for Lombardy. ' We never will abandon the brothers who fought by our side—not

to save Piedmont from annihilation,' said Azeglio. 'Peoples, like individuals, should prefer death to dishonour.' These noble sentiments were fully shared by the king.

But there was another point on which he was even more sensitive, and where he felt the responsibility to be his alone: this was the *Statuto*, which the Austrians again attacked, threatening to break off the negotiations unless it were modified. But Victor was inexorable; in public and private he vowed he would resign his kingdom sooner than touch it. 'I have promised,' said he, 'to maintain the constitution *intact*, and I never will violate my oath; sooner than submit to foreign dictation on the subject, we will all go to America.'

The general election took place on July 15, and the Parliament opened on the 30th. The country was in a miserably distracted, impoverished state, full of discontent, everyone blaming someone else for the public misfortunes. Many of the electors had abstained from voting, out of weariness and disgust with politics. Those who did vote were the 'Reds,' who sent many at least of the Radical agitators who had composed the late Parliament back again. One person, even, who had been excluded from the amnesty for open rebellion in Genoa—the Marchese Pareto, who owed it to the king's special grace that he was not in prison—was duly elected deputy to the Chamber.

Notwithstanding this the Turin people were coming to their senses, and beginning to see the king's conduct in a clearer and juster light. He was welcomed more

warmly on his way to the Legislative Assembly than ever before, and the royal discourse was well received. Victor seemed happier than he had been since his accession ; and on his return to the palace he said to Azeglio in a gay tone, 'Don't you think the Tyrant did his part well to-day?' He used to call himself 'the Tyrant' jestingly to his friend.

But the happiness was short-lived. Even while he was delivering the speech from the throne, his beloved father was already dead. Victor, who had constantly corresponded with the late king, felt his loss deeply, and made arrangements for the transfer of his body to the family mausoleum at Superga, near Turin.

Over and above this private trouble, he found himself all at variance with the new Parliament, which seemed as impracticable and difficult to get on with as the last. In fact it represented 'Giovane Italia,' which 'being young,' said Azeglio, 'cannot be expected to have much sense, and certainly has little.'

The treaty of peace was signed August 6, 1849—a treaty which Balbo pronounced an *armistice* which would last ten years. It was near coming to an end much sooner. In November a fierce debate, which lasted several days, took place in the Chambers on the subject of the treaty, particularly the provisions relating to the Lombard and Venetian refugees. The government had every intention of protecting them ; but the opposition party were not content with reasonable assurances, they wanted a revision of the treaty. The king and the ministry were of one accord that it was necessary to



dissolve the Assembly, and appeal once more to the country.

In his proclamation the king strongly defends himself and his ministers, severely blames the Chamber for its unreasonable and ill-timed opposition to the Crown, and reproaches the electors for their neglect of duty in not going to the poll.

Cavour thought the bold, firm action of the government at this crisis saved the country, but others thought that it was too arbitrary a measure. As the royal proclamation of Moncalieri has become an historical document, we will quote a paragraph or two from it.

By the dissolution of the Chambers the liberties of the country run no risk whatever. They are guarded by the venerated memory of King Charles Albert, my father; they are confided to the honour of the House of Savoy; they are protected by the religion of my oaths. Who dares fear for them?

Before assembling the Parliament, I addressed to the nation, and particularly to the electors, some frank words. In my proclamation of July 3 I admonished them to bear themselves so as to render the *Statuto* possible. But only a third, or little more, went to the elections. The remainder neglected to exercise that right, which is a strict duty in every free country. I have fulfilled my duty; why have they not fulfilled theirs?

In the speech from the throne I made known the sad conditions of the State. I demonstrated the

necessity of giving a truce to party passions, in order to resolve the vital questions of the day. My words were the result of profound love of my country, and fearless loyalty. What fruit did they obtain? The first acts of the Chamber were hostile to the Crown. . . . I signed a peace with Austria, honourable, and not ruinous. The public good required it. The honour of the country and the religion of my oath demanded that it should be faithfully followed out, without duplicity or equivocation. . . .

I have sworn to maintain justice and liberty. I have promised to save the nation from the tyranny of factions, whatever be the name, objects, or rank of the men who compose them. These promises I fulfil by dissolving a Chamber whose existence had become impossible ; I fulfil them by calling another immediately. But if the country, if the electors, deny me their support, not on me will fall the responsibility of the future.

If I have believed it my duty to give utterance to severe words, I confide in the sense and justice of the public to understand that they are dictated by a profound love of my people and of their true interests ; that they arise from my firm will to maintain their liberty, and to defend them from foreign as well as internal enemies.

The country responded to the king's earnest appeal, which aroused in the electors a sense of duty and citizenship. The new Parliament was composed of different elements from the last—moderate, sensible men, who

had the true interests of the country at heart. The Chambers were opened on December 20. The ceremony was more cheerful than the last. The king began to win the confidence of the people ; his last frank proclamation had done much to bring about a better understanding. He was received with warm applause, as was also Queen Adelaide, who appeared in one of the galleries leading the little Prince Humbert, dressed as a national guardsman. The king's speech was cheerful in tone. He warmly thanked the electors for having listened to his voice, and performed the duty of good citizens.

The new Chamber approved of the treaty with Austria, and amicable relations were resumed between the two countries. '*Votre roi est un bon enfant*,' said Radetsky to the Piedmontese plenipotentiaries. '*Nous l'aimons beaucoup ; nous sommes ses meilleurs amis : nous avons toujours à sa disposition quarante mille baïonnettes.*'

The Piedmontese ambassadors thanked the Marshal for his praises of their sovereign, but declined the proffered aid of bayonets, saying the King of Sardinia had no need of foreign soldiers to hold him on his throne ; he confided in the affection of his subjects.

The ambassador who was sent to represent Austria at the Court of Turin was very well selected for the position. Count Appony was a Hungarian of much ability, tact, and delicacy, and all these qualities were needed in the very sore state of Sardinian feelings at that time.

The peace being finally settled, it was necessary to turn the attention of Parliament to the civil institutions

of the country. The famous *Statuto*, which had been the cause of so much quarrelling, was still a mass of undigested laws. It is true that some legal reforms had been under discussion in the late Assembly, but they had not passed into laws, having excited the bitterest and most strenuous opposition even in the royal household.

To put the new constitution in working order was a task of incalculable difficulty. Piedmont had hitherto been not only an absolute monarchy, but in an extraordinary degree under clerical domination; so that this order retained certain privileges which had been long abolished in other principalities of Italy. Everyone knows how much it goes against the natural inclination of man to resign a power or privilege inherited from ancestors or predecessors of any sort, however founded in injustice. Charles Albert, called by his subjects the Magnanimous, voluntarily resigned his absolutism: but his profound reverence for the Church, and his deep religious feeling, would not let him touch the privileges of the clergy; and these privileges were on the whole much more objectionable than the sovereign's power. There was a constant war going on in the king's mind between his religious convictions and his sense of political justice; and it is said that the Jesuits took advantage of his perturbed state to terrify his soul by awful midnight visions, so that he was sometimes found insensible on his chamber floor in the morning.

But the *Statuto* which he at last promulgated struck indirectly at those privileges, by providing that

'all subjects should be equal in the eyes of the law ;' and when Victor Emmanuel's government came to apply the articles of the *Statuto*, they had, amongst other abuses, to deal with the important question of the *Foro Ecclesiastico*. The *Foro Ecclesiastico* was a powerful tribunal over which the clergy only presided. A council of three bishops had the right to pronounce sentence of death on any ecclesiastic. The pain of death for offences against religion was part of the penal code ; to the Church was still permitted that relic of mediæval lawlessness—the right of asylum for criminals ; to the parish priest were left all civil registers ; to the Jesuits the right to penetrate everywhere—to rule the royal household, the private homes of citizens, the public institutions, the schools, etc. ; so that the country was absolutely subject to the priestly power.

In the new Chamber the Minister of Grace and Justice, Count Avete, boldly asserted that by the 24th and 68th articles of the *Statuto*—the first of which declared all subjects equal before the laws, while the second provided that justice should be administered in the name of, and the judges chosen by, the king—the ecclesiastical tribunal should cease to exist. His successor, Sclopis, said that the existence of a privileged jurisdiction, independent of the royal authority—regarding affairs entirely temporal—was quite irreconcilable with the provisions of the Statute Book.

The clergy were naturally up in arms ; they protested against the sacrilege and impiety of touching their ancient privileges ; they denounced in the grossest

language the promulgators of these wicked laws, particularly Siccardi, a man of great probity and learning, who had given many years of his life to the study of jurisprudence, and was energetic in carrying out the reforms. Count Siccardi was sent on an embassy to the Pope to ask his consent to the abolition of the above-mentioned abuses, and to beg him to put a check on the insolence of the Piedmontese bishops, who were trying to excite civil dissensions in the realm. Antonelli replied that 'the Holy Father was willing to please the King of Sardinia as far as going into the antechamber of the devil, but into his very chamber he would not go.'

The Sardinian king and Parliament, indignant at the insult, set about abolishing the clerical privileges and immunities without further ceremony. They were branded as infidels who wanted to overturn the altar, and destroy all religion. Victor Emmanuel did not like this reputation; he protested to the French ambassador that he was not 'a bad Christian,' as he had been falsely represented, and tried in every way possible to conciliate the irate priesthood. He had had a hard trial in the opposition of the queen dowager, who wearied him with entreaties and exhortations not to give his sanction to the anti-clerical acts. But however grieved he was at his mother's distress, he never dreamed of letting any consideration interfere with his public duty. When he put his signature to the act, he looked at Siccardi with a smile, and said, 'Look to it, Count; if this law leads those who have made it to the *inferno*, you will have to go alone.'

It was followed by a burst of rage from the clergy—

protestations from Rome, and protestations from the Piedmontese bishops. Two of these violated the law of the realm and were consequently punished, a delicate intimation that the *Statuto* had begun to work, and the clergy were to be treated like any other delinquents.

Victor Emmanuel was consoled for the abuse which the clergy poured out upon him, and which caused him acute pain, by the ever-increasing affection of his subjects. The abolition of the *Foro Ecclesiastico* made him immensely popular throughout Piedmont; his triumph was shared by his minister Siccardi, to whom the nation decided on immediately building a monument.

When the king went in the summer-time on a tour in the Alps he took Siccardi with him, that they might do some work from time to time in their resting-places. The following characteristic letter is addressed to Azeglio :—

Dear Friend,—In this Alpine retreat I never forget my friend. Thanks for your two letters. We arrived here on Saturday at eleven, after a week of terrible fatigues over the glaciers of Dondenaz and Cogne. I traversed the valleys of Bard, Champorcher, Fenils, Saint Julien, and Cogne, and found everywhere proofs of true affection from these hardy sons of the Alps. On Sunday I received almost the whole town of Aosta, which came to compliment me in a truly cordial manner. Some of these discourses I will send you, because they are really fine. In the replies I was aided by the sincerity of my sentiments and my small poetic vein.

I had good fortune in the chase, too. I killed six chamois and two stags of the rare kind. I astonished the hunters of these mountains by the length of my shots, and we have left a good impression of ourselves also, because Barba Vittorio makes money circulate a little.

To-day (Monday) is a very sad day for us, for me in particular. It is the anniversary of my poor father's death. I ordered a high mass to be said, and almost all the national guards of Aosta came in uniform to assist at it with great decorum. They have asked that my second son, who is duke of these regions, should be enrolled as one of them, and my consent gave them great pleasure. But, dear Massimo, I am very sad, and I do nothing all day but shed tears, thinking of him I loved so dearly, and of the mournful past. . . .

Write to me, dear friend. Take care of your health ; and think sometimes of Barba Vittorio, who loves you from his heart, and who never deceives.

Your affectionate

July 29, 1850.

VITTORIO EMANUELE.

To the Noble Man, Chevalier Massimo Azeglio,  
President of the Council, &c.

*Barba Vittorio* means 'uncle Victor' in the Piedmontese dialect, and was probably a name given to the king by some of the little mountaineers, with whom he loved to converse familiarly, and play the part of 'special Providence.' There are many anecdotes told of his



adventures in the Alps, which show his genial, sympathetic nature. One time he asked a little girl if she had ever seen the king? The child replied that his majesty often came to her father's cottage to eat *polenta* with them. 'You little story-teller,' said Victor, with his good-natured laugh. 'Here is a piece of money, and don't tell fibs any more.'

Another day he met a little barefooted boy in a wood, carrying his shoes in his hand. The king asked him why he did not put on his shoes. 'They wear out,' was the reply. 'And the soles of the feet, don't they wear?' 'Yes, but the skin grows again, and costs nothing.' 'What is your name?' asked Victor. 'Albert.' The king took out a gold piece and put it in his hand. 'You bear my father's name, my boy,' said he; 'buy a pair of new shoes with this.'

One evening descending from the mountain, after a hard day's sport, with one attendant, he met a peasant farmer who accosted him thus:—'You seem brave hunters, gentlemen; you would do me a great kindness if you would kill a fox which destroys all my property.' 'To-day our ammunition is exhausted,' replied the royal sportsman; 'but we will pass this way to-morrow.' On the morrow he pursued and killed the animal, bringing its head in triumph to the peasant, who thanked the king, and gave him two francs for his trouble. Victor put the francs in his pocket, saying to his friend, 'These are the only moneys I ever really earned.'

Soon after, the peasant was summoned to the royal villa, and, to his amazement, recognised in King Victor

Emmanuel, the Alpine hunter, who returned him his two francs with enormous interest.

In this year, 1850, the Duke of Genoa married Elizabeth of Saxony, and the king and queen made a tour through Savoy to meet the bride and bridegroom, and fête them on their return. While the royal family travelled by the easiest routes in carriages to Courmayeur, the king and his brother made an excursion across the mountains in hunting costume; and after the usual fatigues, adventures, and enjoyments, joined the ladies in their rustic retreat. While sojourning in the mountains all court etiquette was laid aside, and the royal family lived in the utmost simplicity. The primitive inhabitants of those wild regions did not even know the king by sight. One day a woman came to the door of the royal villa with eggs, and met on the threshold a roughly dressed individual, who saluted her graciously, and asked her what she had in her basket. This man took the basket, brought it into the kitchen, and then returned it to her empty, with a piece of money. Seeing him so polite, the woman confided to him her desire to see the king,—the queen she had already seen.

‘I am he,’ said Victor, who with his thick boots, gaiters, conical hat, and rough sun-burnt features, was not the peasant’s *beau idéal* of regal majesty. ‘You!’ she exclaimed with a derisive laugh. ‘Oh, you won’t get me to believe that! A nice, pretty woman like the queen would never marry such an ugly man.’

The king related the story to the queen, laughing heartily, and often repeated it to his friends when telling of his first trip to Courmayeur.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE BEGINNING OF THE QUARREL WITH ROME, AND  
CONTINUATION OF THE QUARREL WITH AUSTRIA.  
A.D. 1850-53.

ONE of the king's ministers, who had assisted at the passing of the Siccardi bill for the abolition of clerical privileges, was the Cavaliere Santa Rosa, a gentleman of excellent private character, and a pious Catholic. He was dying of consumption, even while he sat in the council ; and soon after the prorogation of Parliament he succumbed to the fatal disease. His confessor had no power to administer the sacrament without the concurrence of the parish priest, who refused it, at the command of his bishop. The dying man protested that he was a true Catholic, that he was conscious of no sin in taking part in the late acts of the government, and implored his confessor to procure for him the last consolations of religion. The confessor, moved with pity, returned once more to the curate, and used all his persuasions to change his resolution. Instead of yielding to the prayer, the brutal priest entered the sick chamber and reviled the dying man so grossly, that his wife, weeping hys-

terically, implored him to quit the house, and not torture her husband in his last agonies. The good Santa Rosa expired without receiving the sacrament ; and all Piedmont was stirred to its depths with indignation, and cried out that the law must be vindicated. The bishop by whose authority this outrage had been committed was imprisoned, and another also for some similar offence.

Naturally the Court of Rome protested against this outrage to the sacred persons of the bishops. An envoy was sent to explain the case to his holiness, and further beg of him to put a restraint on the rebellious language of the clergy. The Pope refused to listen to the Piedmontese ambassador. Later, another was sent, with whom he seemed disposed to treat ; but as he demanded a restitution of the immunities the clergy enjoyed in the reign of Charles Albert, the negotiation ended in smoke. The next move was an autograph letter addressed by Victor Emmanuel to the Holy Father, couched in the most respectful terms, asking him again to restrain the insolence of the clergy, who did not hesitate to insult him and the laws of his realm.

The Pope, not to be outdone in politeness, replied in an autograph letter, in which he said the priests had only done their duty, and begged his majesty to put a restraint on the excessive liberty of the press, 'boiling over with blasphemies and immoralities—to the end that the clergy should not be persecuted, calumniated, and derided.' The irate Pontiff adds, 'Because they defend pure religion and the principles of truth, is this

a reason why they should come under your majesty's displeasure?'

And so these exchanges of royal compliments went on with ever-increasing acerbity.

Azeglio could restrain himself no longer : he rushed to the front of the battle, and wrote a pamphlet under his own name, attacking the papal government under Pio Nono, as he had so often done under his predecessors, but in dignified and measured language.

The death of Santa Rosa, which had given rise to these disputes, gave occasion also to the Premier to call to the vacant post of Minister of Agriculture and Commerce another bold spirit, whose statesmanlike genius far surpassed his own in grand design and daring execution. 'Take care,' said the king, when Azeglio proposed the appointment. 'Cavour will rule you all ; he will send you away ; *he* must be Prime Minister.'

In this year, 1851, a fourth son was born to King Victor, whom he called Charles Albert ; and in the same year was born also the Duke of Genoa's eldest child, Margherita, now Queen of Italy.

Victor Emmanuel at this time had need of all the affection of his subjects, for he had little sympathy from the outer world. He was the only constitutional monarch in Italy. The position of the Lombardo-Venetian provinces was a perpetual thorn in his side, and a continual source of irritation between the governments of Vienna and Turin. The subjugated provinces would rebel from time to time ; and these rebellions being put down with great severity, the Piedmontese, having a

free press, would express their feelings without reserve. Hence arose complaints and counter-complaints. All the other states of Europe were either coldly neutral or critical, with the sole exception of England, 'whose friendship for the House of Savoy and Piedmont was of ancient date, and her sympathy for Italy profound,' says Massari.

The governments both of Berlin and Vienna sent to Victor Emmanuel dictatorial, menacing messages, thinly veiled under the form of friendly advice. In Italy the petty princes were one and all his enemies, his constitutional government being a standing reproach to them, who had violated their oaths. But the greatest enemy of liberal institutions was Ferdinand, King of Naples, who, in 1848, after having sworn upon the Bible to grant a constitution and to join the national war, proceeded to slaughter, imprison, and banish innumerable citizens, for no other offence than taking part in the movement. This old tyrant hated Victor Emmanuel and Piedmont, and was most anxious to put an end to what he called 'the bad example of the King of Sardinia,' or 'the Sardo,' as he designated him in private.

Massari, who is Neapolitan, says he was discontented with his ambassador at the Court of Turin, and recalled him for the following reason: A princess of the Bourbon family asked the Count Grifeo to narrate to her the disorders which had taken place in Turin. He looked amazed at the question, and said no disorders had been known during his residence there. This was enough to excite the distrust of the suspicious sovereign, and Grifeo

was recalled. His successor, Cavaliere Ramirez, better understood what was expected of him.

On presenting his credentials to the Sardinian king he was received courteously; and after the usual exchange of compliments, he began to read an address written in French. The king, who was quite unprepared for an 'allocution' from the Neapolitan ambassador, was not attended by any of his ministers on the occasion. 'The king, my august master,' said Ramirez, reading from the paper, 'has ordered me to explain to your majesty the wishes he has formed for the conservation of your majesty's country, threatened by so many dangers.'

'What are the dangers, M. le Chevalier?' asked the king, interrupting him. The ambassador was not prepared for the question; he hesitated, stammered, and at last spoke of the wicked press, secret societies, and such like. Victor Emmanuel replied with dignity,—

'I have nothing to fear, M. le Chevalier. Behind *my* throne there is neither treason nor perjury.'

When Massimo Azeglio heard of this cutting reply, he felt very proud of his young king, who knew how so well to maintain his own dignity. 'Everyone knows,' said he, with that charming frankness which was a striking characteristic of his, 'that I can always find appropriate phraseology to clothe my thoughts; but indeed I should hardly have been able to give such a telling, pointed reply as that of the king. It is a fact that an honest man has the secret of true eloquence.' The Neapolitan complained to the Austrian ambassador

of the king's rudeness, but Count Appony held that he had provoked the offence, and had better pass it by.

At this time the philosopher Gioberti, tired of political life, was living in Paris, where he published his famous book, '*Rinascimento Civile d' Italia*,' which excited much attention. In treating of Piedmont, he said :—

Except the young sovereign who rules Piedmont, I see no one in Italy who could undertake our emancipation. Instead of imitating Pius, Ferdinand, and Leopold, who violated their sworn compacts, he maintains his with religious observance—vulgar praise in other times, but to-day not small, being contrary to example.

The king was much pleased with Gioberti's book, and while reading it often said, 'I will do what Gioberti says.'

He had enough of trouble and danger to contend with still, but he was more resigned since he knew he had the sympathy of his own people. 'I am not sad,' he said in a letter. 'Dangers threaten me, but one must be a fatalist and say, "God is great," and nothing more.'

Victor Emmanuel, whatever his faults may have been, had a very noble trait of character, which in a prince is particularly admirable—a magnanimity of soul which set him above petty considerations, and made him ignore all personal injuries and offences. He could not bear to have sentences for treason carried out, unless the peace of the country demanded it; and he made a regular habit of setting at liberty all the seditious priests



condemned by the courts of law. 'You have done your duty in condemning them,' said he; 'that is enough to vindicate the law; I do mine in pardoning them.' He never knew what it was to harbour malice against any human being, even when groaning under the weight of undeserved calumnies. 'I am not angry,' he writes to a friend in 1851, 'neither was I ever. I am accustomed to everything; and I know we cannot shut people's mouths, and that malicious persons attack virtue, or those that they think better than themselves, for rage against good, or because they cannot attain their perverse ends. I believe at this moment I know the world well, and nothing can astonish me more.'

One of the calumnies which struck Victor most severely—and which his enemies, knowing this weakness, persisted in reiterating loudly—was that directed against his religious belief. He was said to be an impious scoffer at religion, who laughed to scorn every sacred thing in heaven and earth. The fact was that Victor, who had been brought up by most devout parents, had a profound reverence for religion. It is true he was not, like Charles Albert, an anchorite; on the contrary, he was a pleasure-loving man. But this does not, so far as we know, hinder a man being a pious Catholic—else the Bourbon princes and princesses would not have been such favourites with the Holy Father, or have enjoyed such a reputation for piety as they did.

Victor Emmanuel firmly believed the Italian cause was under the protection of Divine Providence; and in the royal speech for the opening session of 1852, he

insisted on inserting the words, 'Providence, which has plainly blessed our work.' His majesty delivered these words with emphasis as he looked round at the assembly, and was much disappointed to see they did not produce the lively impression he expected.

The king had had for preceptor, when a youth, a very learned divine to whom he was much attached. This Monsignor Charvaz had the courage to espouse the Liberal cause, and stand by his sovereign in the disputes between Church and State—which, it is well known, cost Victor Emmanuel, as well as his father, bitter mental struggles. 'Stick to the constitution,' said Charvaz, 'and let the ignorant and the fanatical scold and shout.' He was a great comfort and support to the king, who used to say that he never saw Monsignor Charvaz without hearing a sermon from him; but, so far from complaining of his severity, took it as a proof that his old governor's affection for him had not diminished.

One day the king sent for Charvaz, wishing to convey to him personally the news of his elevation to the Archbishopric of Genoa. When the Monsignore presented himself, Victor sprang forward with boyish glee, and threw his arms round his neck. 'Monsignore, no sermon to-day, I entreat,' said he, holding him tightly in his strong embrace. 'I know I am a sinner, but I have a good heart, and I will not let you go till you promise not to preach to me to-day.'

Meantime fresh offences were given to Rome by almost every act of the Sardinian Government. There

were then going on very warm debates on the subject of civil marriages, which excited the bitterest feeling amongst the clergy. Azeglio and Cavour had been disagreeing for some time ; finally there was a split in the Cabinet, and the ministry resigned. The king accepted the resignation ; but directed Azeglio to form a new ministry, excluding Cavour and other discordant elements. ' Later we will want Cavour, but not yet,' said the king, who probably feared that he would push matters to extremes prematurely, and so prevent the possibility of a reconciliation with Rome.

While the marriage law was in abeyance during the prorogation of Parliament, the king once more addressed a letter to the Pope, giving all his arguments in favour of it. He hesitated before bidding the clergy defiance on this point. When there was placed before him an elaborate statement on the question, he read it carefully, and then said : ' It is well. Those are the learned arguments of lawyers ; but I must also think how it will be regarded above'—pointing heavenward.

Massimo Azeglio, weary and disgusted with state affairs, and in poor health, resigned office in a few months after he had formed his second ministry, advising the king to call to office his rival Cavour, whom he disliked but admired.

Cavour hesitated, and said that in the face of the extravagant pretensions of Rome he could not accept the responsibility. The king said he would not take his refusal, and sent him to talk with Monsignor Charvaz, who had just come back from an embassy to the Pope.

The result of the conversation confirmed the count in his opinion that he could not get on peaceably with the Holy See. He accordingly recommended the king, in the present excited state of public feeling, to send for Count Balbo, who was more moderate and conservative.

After further negotiations, finding that concessions did not conciliate the Court of Rome, Victor Emmanuel thought it useless to deprive himself of Cavour's able counsel; and this time the count yielded to the royal invitation, and took upon him the conduct of affairs. It was a fortunate day for the king, for Piedmont, for Italy, when this great, wise, far-seeing patriot seized the helm of the state, and guided her over the stormy waters which so often threatened to engulf her, to a safe anchorage.

The bitterness of feeling between Austria and Piedmont broke out from time to time in mutual accusations and complaints. An abortive rebellion in Milan, February 6, 1853, gave occasion for a diplomatic conflict, which threatened to end in actual warfare. The Austrian Government accused Piedmont of encouraging and hatching conspiracies in Lombardy. Piedmont replied that the Lombards were driven to rebellion by an oppressive and cruel government; and indignantly denied having anything to do with conspiracies. Austria responded in injurious terms, speaking of the Piedmontese as 'traitors.' The king, very indignant, addressed a memorandum to the Court of Vienna. 'We must show,' said he to Cavour, 'that the House of Savoy must not

be vilified by any power.' The ambassadors of England and France, feeling the justice of the king's angry message, supported it. Austria was more enraged than ever; and the quarrel arrived at the dangerous point of breaking off diplomatic relations. Count Appony, having vainly remonstrated with his own government, left Turin at the same time that the Sardinian ambassador started from Vienna. It began to be clear to everyone that the Peace of Milan was, what Count Balbo had said, an armistice that would last about ten years. This illustrious author and statesman died on June 3, 1853, and

The world was poorer of a noble man.

Cesar Balbo was one of that brilliant set to which the brothers Azeglio belonged, who united the polish and enlightenment of modern times with the knightly spirit of loyalty and patriotism of the antique Piedmontese gentlemen.

The financial difficulties of Piedmont ever since the war—the indemnity was eighty million francs—were not the least of her troubles. In this year much discussion on the question had been carried on in the Chambers, and great difference of opinion existed on the subject of taxation. Cavour then shared the common lot of all men in his difficult position. The country was poor, the treasury empty, money was required to keep the machinery of the state in motion, and he had no magic treasure house to draw upon, so had to resort to taxes, and was consequently unpopular for a time. His liberalism had previously given offence to the aristocratic conser-

vative party, to which he belonged by birth and antecedents, and this offence was increased by his seeking support from the Left when he found the Right would not advance at his pace.

But Cavour knew how to balance himself between extremes of party, and make use of politicians of every shade of opinion. He was often attacked by the extreme Left, particularly by Brofferio, a clever journalist and dramatist of Republican tendencies, whose bitterest satires were directed against the count, and who was never tired of sneering at him. Cavour's admiration of England had won for him the nickname of 'Lord Camillo' amongst this party. Once when he quoted English institutions in terms of praise—as he often did—there was laughter from the opposition benches. The count said in parenthesis, without losing the thread of his discourse: 'That laughter can only proceed from someone whose name has never reached England.' It was impossible to put out or confuse Cavour, in spite of a certain defect in his speech which he had laboured hard to overcome. But he often put his adversaries to the rout by the ironical smile which he wore while they were speaking. Bonghi says of him:—

His speech was not fluent nor elegant; his voice was sharp and sometimes severe; the words stopped in his mouth; and although he hid the defect by a cough, which he invoked for the occasion, this would have tired his hearers if their spirit were not sustained by the hope, constantly satisfied, of a lucid idea which

shone before them at the end of the period interrupted always, never broken. The hesitation of his tongue never made him lose the thread of his discourse—much less the interruption of his adversaries, whom he provoked rather than feared—feeling sure of his response.

Once Brofferio called him an 'Ultra-Moderate,' and in his reply he said :—

In truth, I have found the words used by the Hon. Brofferio rather too indulgent than severe ; and I feel due gratitude for the exquisite courtesy which distinguishes him in calling me only an 'Ultra-Moderate,' and not having employed the word 'Retrograde,' or the more vulgar, but more expressive '*Codino*.'

Cavour was a man of imperious will, and loved power. The consequence was that his will and that of his royal master sometimes clashed. But he was good-tempered, and both were large-minded, sensible men, who felt the necessity of mutual support in the great work of developing their liberal institutions, to which they were equally devoted ; and so they not only worked well together, but became personally attached to each other.

Though Victor Emmanuel was scrupulously conscientious not to stretch his authority beyond constitutional limits, he did not, on that account, throw all the care and responsibility of affairs on his ministers. He took an active part in all the Cabinet discussions, and

sometimes his simple straightforward policy was found more effective than Cavour's diplomatic play. In the royal speech of December 1853, the words 'restored finances' occurred. The king, reading it over, said: 'Stop; it seems to me we promise too much. Let us put in an "almost." It will be more true, and not spoil the sense of the sentence.'

In this year the king and queen being at Spezzia for sea-bathing, with the royal family, all went on an excursion in a man-of-war. The ship struck on a rock, sprung a leak, and was foundering rapidly, when another vessel came in time to rescue the precious freight from imminent death. When the news arrived in Turin of how near extinction had been the dynasty of Savoy, the people cried, 'God protects Italy!'



## CHAPTER VIII.

THE ALLIANCE WITH ENGLAND AND FRANCE.  
DOMESTIC AFFLICTIONS. A.D. 1854-55.

AMONGST other modern improvements set on foot by Victor Emmanuel's government was railway communication. The line was just completed between Genoa and Turin, and at Count Cavour's suggestion the king and queen went to Genoa to inaugurate it. That once rebellious city, now become intensely loyal, greeted them enthusiastically.

Soon after this pleasant trip troubles came. The little prince Charles Albert died, to the great grief of his mother and father, who were both devotedly fond of their children. Cholera broke out with fearful virulence in the Riviera; but the great populous city of Genoa suffered most in this visitation. The mortality was so great that it was almost impossible to give the most necessary attention to the sick, much less decent burial to the dead.

The king felt it his duty to be with his afflicted subjects; so he sent the Duke of Genoa to represent him at the opening of the Novara line of railway, and hastened to the plague-stricken city, where he distributed

large sums of money for the relief of the sick, visiting the hospitals, and taking an active part in all the works of charity ; for he did not shrink from death in its most repulsive form.

In this year, 1854, the famous Silvio Pellico, author of the book describing Austrian prisons, died at Turin.

In the month of April the treaty of alliance between England and France to defend Turkey against Russian aggression was signed ; and Cavour conceived the bold idea of securing the friendship of those two powerful states by joining in the alliance. The king was more than willing, he was eager for war, if it could be reconciled to the good of Italy. He had said, in 1849, to the English and French ambassadors, that, having done his duty as a soldier, he meant to serve his country in other ways ; and he had honestly done so for the following five years. But his pride as a king and soldier had been too deeply wounded for him to content himself with peaceful occupations the rest of his life. The burning desire to retrieve his lost glory, and wipe out the defeat of Novara, though concealed, had never been extinguished in his breast. 'Our defeat was too ignominious ; we have need of a little glory to raise us up,' he said. In addition to this, Russia and Sardinia had been on very bad terms for a long time ; so he caught at the idea of the alliance, saying, 'If I cannot go to the war myself, I will send my brother.'

The friendship between England and Piedmont had become warmer since 1851, from which time her Britannic Majesty had been represented by Sir James

Hudson, a gentleman for whom Victor Emmanuel conceived the highest esteem and regard. He was in very friendly relations with France also ; and there seemed no impediment to the conclusion of the proposed alliance, except Cavour's natural love of diplomatic mystery. The stir of military preparations in Piedmont excited suspicions of hostile intentions against Austria ; and to quiet these alarms the wily Premier had to show his hand a little to the ambassadors, and say that if England or France called on Piedmont for help, she felt bound to send a contingent to the war. He had no immediate designs on Austria ; though the chief object of this Anglo-French alliance was to put Piedmont in a position to settle that old score. Cavour was probably held back from committing himself definitely by the uncertainty of what part Austria was about to take in the quarrel. It was likely at that time that she might join in the alliance, but nothing was concluded. King Victor writes to the Minister for Foreign Affairs as follows :—

*Cher Dabormida.*—Faites votre possible pour savoir les conditions secrètes stipulées par l'Autriche dans l'adhésion à la triple alliance.

Je ne voudrais pas qu'il y eût quelque article concernant la conservation de l'intégrité du territoire Italien, guerre finie ; cela changerait bien notre affaire dans l'alliance, et il faut en être bien sûr avant.

*Ciao*, cher ami. En avant, marche, et soyez gai.

Votre tres-affectionné,

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

The official announcement of the Anglo-French alliance, made to the Gardic government in the month of April, was replied to in a friendly spirit, but without committing Piedmont to any positive engagement. This was disappointing to the ambassadors, and not quite in accordance with the king's wishes, as he would have preferred a more straightforward course of action. He took occasion to ask the Duke of Gramont to pay him a private visit. 'Come, *sans cérémonie*, in an overcoat, about five o'clock,' said the king, and the ambassador did so.<sup>1</sup> The king was in his hunting-dress, standing by a table, writing, when the ambassador entered. He received him kindly, offered him a cigar, and immediately entered on the subject that was occupying his mind, asking him what he thought of the note which his minister had addressed to him on June 2, and telling him to speak frankly. The duke spoke frankly. He said they had expected something different from a cold expression of sympathy, particularly after what the Conte di Cavour had said six weeks before. He confessed that he thought the note rather diplomatic.

The king said that in his opinion the note was stupid, and he would have written it differently.

The duke then asked if his majesty meant to say that he would stand by the overtures of M. Cavour. 'What do you mean by Cavour's overtures?' asked Victor. 'It is better to call things by their names.

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Gramont communicated the particulars of this interview to Signor Massari. See *La Vita ed il Regno*, &c.

Il n'y a pas d'ouvertures de Cavour; c'est moi qui ai parlé. Je lui ai dit de vous offrir quinze mille hommes. C'est tout ce que nous pouvons donner maintenant, sans quoi j'aurais dit trente.'

'Then, sire, if the proposition came from you, how is it that all has ended in smoke?' asked the ambassador.

The king explained how Cavour had been checked by the attitude of Austria, that he feared the war might not be popular, and that he was greatly influenced by his Lombard friends, and wound up by saying that he knew beyond all doubt that Austria would *not* enter into the alliance, and he was resolved that Piedmont should.

'Sire,' returned the Frenchman, 'I have only to say that I share your opinions, and I heartily wish you may do as you say.'

'Do you doubt it?' said the king, fixing his piercing eyes upon him with an angry light in them.

'No, sire, no; I do not doubt it, and I am only too happy to believe it.'

The king shook hands with him at parting, and told him to keep his own counsel, but not to forget what he had said.

As time wore on Cavour saw clearer what was best for the interests of his country, and earnestly desired as much as did Victor Emmanuel to conclude the treaty; but he was strongly opposed by all his colleagues, particularly Dabormida and La Marmora, both military men, whose opinion on a question of war was not to be despised.

There was at the same time a discussion going forward, as to whether Piedmont was bound in honour to make it a condition of entering into the alliance, that the confiscated property of the Lombards who had made themselves Victor Emmanuel's subjects should be restored to them. England and France objected to the introduction of the question, and some of the ministry were for breaking off the negotiations. But a Lombard refugee, called Achilles Mauri, wrote in his own name and those of his fellow exiles to the effect that they would not let their private interests stand for a moment in the way of any benefit that might accrue to their common country from the Anglo-French alliance; and this disinterested declaration was a help to Cavour in his long and tedious struggle with his colleagues.

The year 1854 drew to a close without any decision. The conferences were renewed early in January, but the ministers were still divided. 'Well, uncle,' said Cavour's niece, the Countess Alfieri, one evening at a party, 'shall we go to the Crimea or not?'

'Who knows?' was the reply. 'England solicits us to enter the alliance, and would permit our soldiers to join her army, and wash out the defeat of Novara. But all the Cabinet is hostile to the project. Even Ratazzi, and my best friend, La Marmora, say they will resign on it. But the king is with me, and we may prevail.'

Hearing of the divisions in the Cabinet, the Duke of Gramont, remembering the words of the king six months before, asked for a private audience on January 9. He found the king in low spirits; for, over and above

the worry of state affairs, his mother and wife were both very ill at the time. He said he was grieved at the result of the conference the evening before ; the ministers were all against him, save only Cavour. But he had pledged his word to the emperor, and he was resolved to keep it. 'If we are beaten in the Crimea, why, we must retire ; but if we conquer, it will serve the Lombards more than all the fine articles that have been written about them. I am weary of telling them this ; as yet they will not listen to me. But, *pazienza*, all will be well in a little while. You know I told you I have one word only ; and if these generals will not march, I must find others who will march. The Chambers and the country are with me.'

The king urged the ministers to a decision, and next day another conference was held ; but the foreign ambassadors refusing to give a written compact, the meeting, which lasted till midnight, broke up without any result. Count Cavour, who for four hours had carried on the discussion, now with the foreign ministers, and now with his colleagues, was quite exhausted at the close, and his usual serene temper gave way.

'I hope you will tell the king what I have said,' remarked the Duke of Gramont.

'I am the best judge of what I ought to tell the king,' replied Cavour brusquely.

It was an hour past midnight when he arrived at the palace and demanded an immediate audience. His advice was to sign the treaty at once, or withdraw altogether from the position. The king did not hesitate a

moment; he had had his mind made up long ago, and so now when Cavour pronounced it safe, he took his own way. Dabormida resigned, and the other ministers yielded to the powerful united will of Victor and Cavour. It was all settled, and Cavour installed as Minister of Foreign Affairs, between twelve at night and four in the morning. At seven o'clock the English and French ambassadors received a note inviting them to an interview. They found Count Cavour serene and smiling. Dabormida, overcome with the fatigues of office, had resigned in the night, he said, and the king had confided to him (Cavour) the vacant post. They were all of one accord now, and the treaty should be signed that evening, if the gentlemen were agreeable. Then he begged the Duke of Gramont to forget his rudeness the evening before, saying they were like advocates, doing the best they could for their clients, and now that the cause was ended they would all dine together to-morrow.

It was a solemn moment for the king (says Massari), and decided the fate of his country: that treaty was the fortune of Italy. To overcome so many difficulties the genius of Cavour was not enough; there was needed also the firmness of purpose of Victor Emmanuel, for without him the treaty would not have been concluded.

And it is quite true. Foreigners have not fully appreciated how much was due to Victor Emmanuel's indomitable courage, firmness, and sound judgment. With



another sort of sovereign the great statesman might not have been able to carry out his designs ; while with a less able minister the patriot king could not have conquered all the difficulties, external and internal, that beset his path. Without taking from the merit of either, we may say that Victor Emmanuel was necessary to Cavour, Cavour to the king, and both to Italy.

During the long and anxious negotiations about the Crimean war, Victor Emmanuel's soul was harrowed by an accumulation of domestic troubles. His mother was hopelessly ill ; Queen Adelaide had had an unfortunate confinement, from which she had not recovered, and the state of her health caused the doctors the gravest apprehensions ; the Duke of Genoa, who was to have represented his brother in the Crimea, was in a precarious state, though soldier-like he refused to give way to his weakness, saying always he should be well when once the order was given to march. 'The poor duke,' said his aide-de-camp, 'he will die if he goes to the Crimea, and he will die if he does not go.'

Victor's affectionate heart was wrung with pity as he went from one sick chamber to another, trying to cheer and comfort his invalids, while he was himself oppressed with care and anxiety of all kinds.

He was a devoted son ; he loved and revered his mother sincerely, and he would sooner have dared the wrath of the whole Catholic world than encounter the prayers and tears of this pious mother, who entreated him not to sanction the anti-clerical laws. Hers was the only remonstrant voice that had power to shake for a

moment his strong will ; but he felt the truth of Azeglio's teaching : ' Your kingly duty over-rides all others,' and he listened silently, uncomplainingly, to her reproaches, but never yielded. Even while he was watching over her last hours she implored him pathetically to be true to the traditions and faith of his fathers.

The queen-mother breathed her last two days after the signing of the treaty, that is, January 12. Her broken-hearted son had to suppress his tears, and present a calm front to the poor young wife, whose sufferings now left her no hope of recovery. Her husband attended her continually, never leaving her except to visit his brother, and for the last five days and nights he never closed his eyes. Those who saw the haggard, grief-stricken face of the poor king in those sad days felt the deepest commiseration for him. All his Piedmontese subjects declare that he was deeply attached to his wife, and that her death was a terrible blow to him. This we may believe, because we have it on the evidence of men who were no courtiers, and whose testimony cannot be doubted. But it is also true that his connection with the Countess Mirafiore was the cause of bitter sorrow to Queen Adelaide. And who can tell what remorse was mingled with his grief, when the royal mourner thought of his motherless little ones, as he bent over the couch of his dying wife, and met the gaze of the sad loving eyes which sought his continually ? <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ' Egli aveva assistito, del continuo, i suoi ammalati, che si consolavano nel trovarselo vicino ; ma più di tutti la moglie, la quale, affranta dai patimenti,olgeva intorno lo sguardo a quando a quando, per fissare colui ch' ella chiamava "mio buon Vittorio."—Ghiron.

The queen consort expired on January 20, just eight days after the queen dowager. Her death was an irreparable loss, for such a wife and mother as Adelaide must have made her influence felt alike in the family and the court.

One invalid was all that now remained to the unhappy king,—his gallant brother, sinking rapidly day by day, while he still hoped to lead his brave soldiers to the war, and obliterate the memories of 1849. 'I shall be better next week,' the poor consumptive would say; but every week found him worse. On the day that the troops marched out of Turin they came by the palace, and the duke was carried to the window to look out at them. As they disappeared from his gaze, he sighed as if his heart would break; it seemed as if his last hope was gone. He died on February 10, exactly a month after the signing of the treaty. Next day, the king issued a public announcement of his loss.

Grief comes upon grief, misfortune upon misfortune.

My loved brother, he who was my companion in the battle-field, a perpetual comfort and aid to me in deeds and in counsel; he who, over and above the tie of blood, was bound to me by the most powerful affection of a warm reciprocal friendship, is no more! He breathed his last sigh yesterday evening, a little after ten. With a lacerated heart I announce to you this my new grief, which will be profoundly felt, I am certain, by all the nation, who in the Duke of Genoa not only admired the prince of

high aims and indomitable valour, but saw also the splendid example of every virtue.

Ferdinand, Duke of Genoa, was born in 1822, and was just two years younger than Victor. He had a good intellect, a kind heart, and a chivalrous spirit. To say he was brave would be superfluous praise in treating of a Prince of Savoy ; but the duke was an able as well as a gallant soldier ; and if Victor merited the title, which his people proudly cede him, of ' First Soldier of Italy,' Ferdinand, they assert, ought to be called the second. In 1848 he was invited to the throne of Sicily, on condition that he should be called by his second name, Albert, his first, Ferdinand, being too hateful to the islanders by reason of the Bourbon kings who had borne it.

The affection and esteem which Victor Emmanuel felt for the duke, and which made him thank Providence for having given him such a rare brother, were fully reciprocated by him, and if he had been spared he would have been a great consolation to the king in his hour of trial. But a cruel fate swept his house clean of all its grown members at one swoop, leaving him alone in his sorrow ; while the clergy, loudly proclaiming that the judgment of heaven had descended on the wicked king for his persecution of the Church, hissed at him that he was accursed, and tried every secret art to terrify his afflicted soul.

These denunciations were quickly drowned in a roar of popular indignation, and execrations on the priests who dared to insult the sovereign's grief ; for now the

hearts of king and people beat in unison, and his sorrow was theirs. The citizens beset the palace day and night with inquiries for the health of the royal family ; and inside, men of all shades of opinion met with tears in their eyes, drawn together by a common calamity. All Turin, all Piedmont, was in the greatest mourning, and by every evidence which it is possible at such a moment to show, made the royal mourner feel that he had his people's truest sympathy.

The king had ordered that each of the soldiers who had escorted the queen's body to Superga should receive 200 francs. They took it, but only to spend in purchasing two magnificent garlands to lay upon her tomb, and that of the queen-mother—saying that they were more than rewarded by the honour. Loyalty in Piedmont must have been a sincere and high-wrought sentiment when it could make common soldiers feel as delicately and act as gracefully as high-bred gentlemen.

The good Archbishop of Genoa, Monsignor Charvaz, hastened to Turin to lend what consolation an old friend and pastor might, and his presence was much needed ; for to feel himself cut off from the Church at such a moment was agony to Victor Emmanuel. Cavour, so potent in mundane matters, had no spell to charm away his master's grief, or quiet his disturbed conscience. He wanted a minister of religion to speak gentle words of faith, and charity, and love, to soothe his wounded spirit. 'They tell me,' said he, in a voice broken by sobs, 'that God has struck me with a judgment, and has torn from me my mother, my wife, and my brother,

because I consented to those laws, and they threaten me with greater punishments. But do they not know,' he added, 'that a sovereign who wishes to secure his own happiness in the other world ought to labour for the happiness of his people on this earth?'

Azeglio says :—

I found him thinner by half than he had been. His waistcoat, which used to be tight, I could put my hand in, and still it hung loose on him. But, with the exception of a couple of days, he attended to affairs, and signed documents, saying to me these noble words, 'I am king ; it is my duty !' Certainly he appears fifteen years older. However, the stuff, physical and moral, is strong, and I have no fear.

## CHAPTER IX.

RATAZZI'S LAW.—CRIMEAN WAR.—VISIT TO PARIS  
AND LONDON. A.D. 1855.

DURING the illness of the two queens and the Duke of Genoa the king was not only harassed by the question of the Anglo-French alliance, but by the still more difficult one concerning the redistribution of Church property in Piedmont. The wealth of the bishops and monastic communities was enormously out of proportion with the resources of the country, while the inferior clergy were sunk in poverty, and had to be partly supported by the state. There were 2,540 parishes with only an income of 20*l.* per annum, and the assistance rendered to them by the state, with other ecclesiastical expenses which it could not afford, amounted to 200,000*l.* The Church owned at this time more than a tenth part of the landed property of the country, and had amassed untold wealth by other means.

The arrogance and intolerance displayed by the bishops in their bitter opposition to every attempt at reform, and the absolute refusal of the Pope to sanction any readjustment of ecclesiastical property, roused the Sardinian Government to take decisive measures to strip

the prelates of some of their power and privileges. The extreme Liberals were for confiscating all Church property and paying the clergy a salary, but Cavour chose a medium course. Whenever a see fell vacant he reduced the number of superfluous bishops by withholding presentation, which was the right of the government. Meanwhile his colleague Ratazzi, Minister of Grace and Justice, introduced the famous bill for the suppression of a certain number of religious houses, and other changes in ecclesiastical affairs, which struck the old-fashioned folk called *Codini* with horror, and roused the fiercest opposition on the part of the clergy. It was impious ; it was sacrilegious, it was everything that was wicked ; nothing but destruction could come to the country which permitted such disastrous laws to pass.

The bill was under discussion when the terrible calamities which befel the king interrupted the sittings, and gave occasion to the clergy to point out that Providence had manifestly blighted the House of Savoy for its sins against the Church. The government could not shut the mouths of the disaffected clergy without laying itself open to the charge of persecution ; and the clergy left nothing undone to stir up a religious fanaticism among the people. The king, stunned and prostrated mentally and physically by the cruel trials he had passed through, shrank from a conflict between Church and State, and was disposed to compromise matters when the bishops offered to make up the necessary sum to pay the parish clergy if the Ratazzi Bill were withdrawn.

On April 14 the king and court went to Alessandria



to pass in review the 25,000 troops, about to set out for the seat of war, and to give them new banners. All the soldier awoke within him at the sight of his brave army, always so loyal and devoted to their king, and he longed to be free to lay down the sceptre and resume the sword once more. 'Ah, General,' he said to La Marmora, with a profound sigh, 'happy you! You go to fight soldiers; I remain to fight monks and nuns!'

The ministers of France and England had accompanied the Sardinian court to Alessandria to assist at the presentation of banners, and they were much pleased with the aspect of the men.

*Order of the Day.*

Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Soldiers!—A war founded on justice, on which the tranquillity of Europe and the fate of our country depends, calls you to the East. You shall see distant lands where the Cross of Savoy is not unknown; you shall see brave people and armies whose fame fills the world. Let their example stimulate you to show to all that the valour of your fathers has not decreased. On former occasions I have conducted you to the field of honour; and I remember with pride how I shared with you the dangers and fatigues of war. To-day I am grieved to separate from you for a time; but I shall follow you in thought everywhere, and that will be a happy day on which I shall be permitted to join you once more.

Soldiers! here are your colours! They were

generously unfurled by the magnanimous Charles Albert, and they will help to remind you in a distant country of eight centuries of noble traditions. Defend them! Bring them back crowned with new glory, and your sacrifices shall be blessed by present and future generations.

From the soul-stirring prospect of military glory, which was the only thing that could have roused him from his unhappy state at that moment, Victor Emmanuel turned to the hateful contest with monks and nuns. His soul sickened at the ignoble warfare, and when the Bishop of Casalmongera, in the name of the episcopacy of Piedmont, made the offer in the Senate of a large sum for payment of clerical dues, the king wished to accept it. This brought on a ministerial crisis. While it lasted the king consulted not only the most eminent and able of his own subjects, but the ministers of France and England. All agreed that he ought to recall Cavour; and so he turned again to the *Bestia Nera*, as the fanatics called the great reformer, and reinstated him in power. The Senate resumed the discussion on the suppression of monasteries, etc., and after long debates agreed to the Ratazzi Bill with modifications, which the Chamber of Deputies accepted, and, the royal sanction being given, it became law.

Cavour resigned on this, but was almost immediately recalled to office, and the bill was at last passed in May.

'We shall always count it one of the proudest acts of our political career,' said Cavour, 'that we knew how

to sacrifice every personal consideration for what we considered a sacred duty.'

Many were the friendships lost and bitter enmities incurred by him and the king in their daring determination to pass this measure. The relentless animosity of a numerous and influential class, finding themselves suddenly despoiled of their ancient privileges and a great portion of their wealth, Victor Emmanuel was made to feel to the utmost. They had tried to work upon his feelings and his conscience by reminding him of his dead mother's wishes, and when he was proof against all their subtle attempts to conquer his reason, they slandered and calumniated him without scruple on the points where he was most sensitive. Victor Emmanuel, besides having a great reverence for the Church, entertained such a personal regard and esteem for Pio Nono as made the struggle doubly painful to him. When the accident happened at St. Agnes' Church near Rome, from which the Pope escaped unhurt, the king wrote him a cordial letter of congratulation. This was in April, before the obnoxious bill was passed, and Pius replied courteously to the missive.

The ministry was recomposed, General Durando being Minister of War, Signor Ratazzi of the Interior, Count Ciprario, an able and devoted servant of the Crown, particularly dear to Victor Emmanuel, Minister of Foreign Affairs, while Count Cavour, President of the Council, also took charge of the finances.

This question settled—if it could be called settled while such a storm of clerical indignation was raging

throughout the country—Victor Emmanuel turned his longing eyes towards the Crimea, where the allied armies were suffering from the ravages of cholera. He desired to share their hardships and dangers, but his people would not consent ; so he had to content himself with the joyful news of the victory won by the allies at the Tchernaya, August 16, 1855, in which his Piedmontese comported themselves most valiantly, and La Marmora proved himself one of the ablest generals in Europe. Queen Victoria and the Emperor Napoleon sent warm congratulations to the King of Sardinia, and he thrilled with exultant pride, while all Italy rejoiced. He was just then doing the honours of Turin to a succession of royal guests—the Prince of Portugal, afterwards his son-in law, and the son and daughter of the good King Leopold of Belgium, for whom he had a great respect.

Late in the autumn the king, returning from the chase tired and heated, and having to cross a river to arrive at his *castello*, with his usual impatience refused to wait for the boat which should have carried him across, and plunged with his horse into the icy water. Violent fever, accompanied by racking pains in his bones, was the natural consequence of this imprudence. Great alarm was felt for several days, and Cavour was in a state of intense anxiety, not on public grounds alone, but also because, like everyone who shared the counsels of the genial, warm-hearted Victor, he had become personally attached to him. He watched his convalescence with joy ; and, partly for the king's sake and partly for political motives, he begged him to accept

the invitation to visit his august allies, Victoria and Napoleon. It was desirable to draw the bonds of friendship closer by personal intercourse; and also to contradict the slanders which the clerical party were circulating in England and France.

At first Cavour thought it better not to accompany his master, as it might give too political a character to the visit. But afterwards he was persuaded that he might profit by the occasion to let his English friends know more particularly the state of affairs in Italy. He made it a condition that Massimo Azeglio should accompany them, 'his presence being necessary to prove to the world that we are not infected by the revolutionary stain.'

Cavour and Azeglio had quarrelled; but they imolated all ill will on the altar of patriotism. A reconciliation took place, and mutual esteem soon ripened into a firm friendship, which was only dissolved by death.

Before setting out on the journey, the Legislative Assembly was opened, November 12. It was the first time the king had opened Parliament since his domestic afflictions, and though nearly a year had elapsed, the memories awakened by the ceremony had an agitating effect on him. The Prince of Carignano now stood beside the throne in the place of his brother, while the gallery where his wife and mother were wont to sit was vacant. His voice trembled a little when he first began to speak, but he conquered the weakness as he went on.

*The King's Speech.*

Gentlemen Senators, Gentlemen Deputies,—The year that is almost finished has been for my heart a period of cruel trials. They were alleviated by seeing the tears of the whole nation associated with the mourning of my house, and in the midst of my sorrows God sustained me to fulfil my duty.

I turn my glance to the great struggle which for two years has raged in the East. I did not hesitate to unite my arms to that party which combats for the cause of justice, civilisation, and the independence of nations. I was urged to it by the desire to share in the triumph of those principles which we are propagating, the generous instincts of the Subalpine people, and the traditions of my family. Our soldiers, uniting with the valiant armies of France, England, and Turkey, seconded by the zeal and activity of our fleet, have shared perils and glories with them, and increased the ancient fame of this warlike country.

May God crown their united efforts with greater success, and render possible a lasting peace securing to each nation its legitimate rights.

The expenses of the war will render necessary a fresh recourse to the public credit. The scarcity of the harvests, the renewed scourge of cholera, united with other unexpected contingencies, have diminished the public revenues. If, contrary to the desire of my heart, necessity compels us to ask fresh sacrifices of

the nation, my government will seek by every means to render these imposts as light as possible. It will project a law for the more equal distribution of taxes, so that they will not press so heavily on the poorer classes.

Other laws to improve the political administration and economy of the State, the courts of justice, and public instruction, shall be proposed for your consideration.

Gentlemen Senators, Gentlemen Deputies,—The arduous mission which is confided to you, you will prosecute so as to give proofs of that prudence and laboriousness, of that constant affection for the interests of the country, for which you have been distinguished. We shall thus continue the noble example of a king and a nation bound by the indissoluble ties of love and confidence, in joy as in grief, being always in accord in maintaining the two great bases of public happiness—order and liberty.'

The king was received on his first appearance with the warmest demonstrations of affection, and was loudly applauded at the conclusion of his speech. He was touched and gratified by these demonstrations; for Victor, not pretending to be superior to popular praise, always acknowledged himself proud of the devotion of his subjects. 'How could my uncle,' he once said, speaking of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, 'by his own doing, sacrifice the affections of his people? If I reigned not over a little state like Piedmont, but an empire

vast as America, and I was obliged to do what he has done, to preserve the little throne of Tuscany, I would not hesitate a moment, I would renounce empire.'

On November 30 the king started from Turin. At Lyons, Cavour and Azeglio awaited him. The latter humorously describes how they drove side by side in the same carriage for public edification, like rivals shaking hands on the stage.

Victor Emmanuel was well received in Paris, and the emperor and empress vied with each other in the most delicate attentions. The arms of the Sabaud family were emblazoned on the Sèvres china, and everything destined for his use. On the table of his *salon* was a portfolio of drawings, representing all the glorious feats of arms of the Piedmontese in 1848. This delicate flattery was not confined to the monarch alone. Azeglio found in his room four of his own beautiful pictures, for which the galleries and royal palaces had been searched. Cavour may be supposed to have had his own peculiar vanity, though not so patent as that of the soldier-king and the noble artist; and without doubt his French hosts knew how to tickle it in some graceful, subtle way—at which he may have smiled, but must have been pleased.

The sovereigns parted with the warmest expressions of personal regard on both sides; and before saying adieu the emperor asked the momentous question, which must have set Victor's brain throbbing, '*Que peut-on faire pour Italie?*'

The Honest King's welcome in England, if not so in-



genious in complimentary devices, was beyond all doubt as hearty and sincere. He was just the sort of man the English nation delights to honour. The people love a hero, particularly a hero who has fought for some oppressed nationality, and when that hero who defended his nation's rights was himself a sovereign who rejected the despotic power which his neighbours wanted to thrust upon him, resting his authority on the devotion of his subjects—their enthusiasm knew no bounds. There was something, too, in the admiration and sympathy which Victor Emmanuel and his minister always openly expressed for England, pointing to it as an example of the splendid effects of constitutional monarchy.

'The Times' spoke of the illustrious guest as 'a prince gallant in war, wise in council, constant in adversity, tried above the common lot in domestic as well as political life, and under every aspect worthy of the cordial sympathy of the English people.'

The Queen and Prince Consort were not less warm than the nation in the welcome they gave him. Azeglio, in his charming letters, describes the interesting visit, and says they were entertained with feudal magnificence. Queen Victoria bestowed the Order of the Garter on her illustrious namesake, whom she treated as 'an old friend ;' and the visitors were enchanted with everything English, except the climate, which in mid-winter did not make a favourable impression. The Italians made their entry into the metropolis in a bitter north wind. 'In full dress in an open carriage, with no mantle to protect me,

I suffered the agonies of the *inferno* with neuralgia in my face,' says Azeglio.

King Victor was much too hardy a hunter to be ruffled by a north wind, and he enjoyed everything, particularly the reviews, for the English troops filled him with admiration.

The City of London gave a grand banquet at the Guildhall in honour of the royal guest, where he was received with the warmest demonstrations ever accorded to a foreign prince. King Victor did not speak English, and he preferred to reply to the Lord Mayor's address in his own language rather than French.

My Lord Mayor,—I warmly thank the Lord Mayor and the aldermen and the *comune* of the City of London for the courteous felicitations that they have presented me with on the occasion of my visit to Queen Victoria and the English nation.

The welcome I have met in this ancient home of constitutional liberty—of which this address is a confirmation—is a proof of the sympathy inspired by the policy I have followed till now, and in which I intend to persevere.

The close alliance between the two most powerful nations of the earth, whom I am now visiting, is an honour to the wisdom of the sovereigns who rule them not less than to the character of the peoples. They have learned to substitute a profitable friendship for an ancient rivalry, and this alliance will contribute to the triumph of civilisation.

In spite of the misfortunes that have weighed on the beginning of my reign, I also have entered into this alliance, because the House of Savoy believes it to be always its duty to unsheathe the sword in the cause of justice and independence; and if I bring to my allies the forces of a small kingdom, I bring at least the strength of a loyalty which no one has ever doubted, supported by the valour of an army which always follows faithfully the banner of their king. We cannot lay down our arms till we have obtained an honourable and lasting peace; and with the aid of Providence this will be arrived at by seeking to reconcile the true rights and just desires of every nation.

I thank you for the good wishes which you have offered me to-day for my future and that of my kingdom. But while you speak to me of the future, I am happy instead to speak to you of the present, and I congratulate you on the high position England occupies as due to the free and noble character of the nation, and to the virtues of your queen.

On December 11, Turin welcomed the return of her beloved king with clamorous applause—all the warmer because he was so highly appreciated in other countries.

## CHAPTER X.

THE CONGRESS.—THE PEACE. A.D. 1856.

THE fall of Sebastopol early in the year 1856 ended the winter's campaign, and an armistice was concluded between the belligerents. In order to take part in a conference to consider the future plan of action for the allies, General Alfonzo La Marmora was recalled from the Crimea. The king was delighted to see his old friend who had so well represented him at the war, and expressed the greatest regret for his brother, General Alessandro La Marmora—famous as the founder of the Bersaglieri—who had died of cholera in the Crimea.

The Congress was to meet in February at Paris, and every state was to be represented by two plenipotentiaries. The King of Sardinia wished to send as first plenipotentiary Cavaliere Massimo Azeglio; but he objected, saying that he disliked the office, hated courts, was no diplomatist, and in short would not go unless it were an absolute obligation. Count Cavour hated the office equally, because he heard that as Austria had proposed the peace, and was pressing it upon Russia, she would have a powerful voice in the Congress, and Piedmont would look small.

‘What is the use of our going to the Congress to be treated like children?’ said he. But the king overcame his reluctance, and he wrote to the Marquis Villamarina, who was to be the second plenipotentiary :—

I have not hesitated, in spite of the innumerable affairs that claim my attention in Turin, in spite of my excessive repugnance to play the diplomat—I have not hesitated to announce to the king that I am ready to start for the Congress, and I pray you to join me in this ungrateful mission.

To tell how bravely he struggled to maintain the dignity of his country against the Austrian schemes to humiliate her, belongs to Cavour’s life ; but it reflects glory on the reign of Victor Emmanuel, and should not be altogether unnoticed. Cavour’s large-hearted patriotism was not confined to the narrow limits of Piedmontese territory, but embraced all Italy. Piedmont was naturally his first care, for she was the centre and seat of independent thought and action. But all Italy was his country ; he had one great end in his life for which he laboured incessantly, indefatigably—and that was Italian unity.

He now seized the opportunity of the Congress to make the wrongs of Italy fully known to all Europe. He had previously written a letter to the emperor in which he had fully answered his question, ‘What can we do for Italy?’, concluding thus :—

The emperor can render immense service to Italy—

firstly, by inducing Austria to do justice to Piedmont and maintain her engagements; secondly, by obtaining from her a mitigation of the régime that weighs upon Lombardy and Venetia; in the third place, by forcing the King of Naples not to scandalise civilised Europe by a deportment contrary to all the principles of justice and equity; in the fourth place, by re-establishing an equilibrium in Italy such as was settled at the Treaty of Vienna, that is to say, rendering possible the removal of the Austrians from the Legations and the Romagna, by placing those provinces under a secular prince, or procuring them the benefit of a laic and independent administration.

Cavour had the warm sympathy of the English plenipotentiaries, Lords Clarendon and Cowley, and also that of the Bonaparte family. He put himself in friendly relations with the Russian envoys, though Russia and Piedmont had long been on bad terms and lately were open enemies; in short, he left nothing undone to win sympathy for his country, and gain a hearing for her woes; but other questions had to be first decided.

The Congress was drawing to a close, and Cavour had found no opportunity to introduce the state of Italy. Austria had been careful to circulate the idea that it was a land of lawless revolutionists; and after the Congress was ended, she would resume her tyranny in the provinces under her rule, and her aggressions

against Piedmont, if the question were allowed to sink into oblivion.

Outside the Congress the representatives of England and France, in answer to Count Cavour's importunities, invited him to make known his views on the state of Italy, and he drew up a memorial and laid it before these two powers. At last with much difficulty he obtained the emperor's consent to bring the Italian question before the Congress. The particulars of that conference were not made known, but a letter written by the Tuscan minister at Paris will give an idea of what a lively discussion it was.

[Strictly private.]

Paris : April 15, 1856.

In the preceding despatch I had the honour to announce to your Excellency that the Sardic plenipotentiaries were finally allowed to discourse in the Congress on Italian affairs. To the particulars contained in that report I may now add the following :—The motion of the Sardic plenipotentiaries took place on the twentieth supplementary sitting, that is, on April 8. Signor Cavour, having drawn a very ugly picture of the general condition of our peninsula, touched upon the delicate theme of the presence of foreign troops in the Pontifical States and in the Grand-ducal States ; and endeavoured to show that by means of proper reforms the discontent might be removed, and the country guaranteed against the immense danger of the increasing activity of the revolutionists. He took

pains to show that in the Papal States, as in the grand-ducal, there was no want of elements to constitute a force of their own sufficient to maintain order; and in support of his argument he cited with words of high praise the example of Tuscany, and on the management of our troops he dwelt with much eulogium.

As to the state of the Two Sicilies, Count Cavour, without dissimulation, spoke in the hardest terms, picturing it in the most repulsive colours. He spoke in the same terms of the condition of the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom, and hinted at the necessity of some reforms more in accordance with the requirements of the present age. . . .

Lords Clarendon and Cowley supported strongly the motion of Count Cavour, and passed in review the leading points treated of by the Sardic plenipotentiaries. It was at this point that Lord Clarendon questioned Count Buol in a very warm manner on the intentions of the Cabinet of Vienna with regard to Italy; and Count Buol replied more warmly in a manner to take away all hope that Austria was disposed to enter line upon that ground. The discussion assumed a very grave aspect. Clarendon, piqued by the bare, peremptory reply of Buol, said, 'If your intention is really to make no promise, nor enter into any engagement towards Italy, it amounts to throwing down the gauntlet to Liberal Europe, which will not fail to take it up. The question will then be decided by means the most vigorous



and energetic. It is a great mistake for you to believe that *our* forces are exhausted.'

It was Clarendon who, talking of the Pontifical States, was bold enough to say that the government of the Pope was *une honte pour l'Europe*.

This, which the English plenipotentiary said in a moment of passion, excited the Count Buol, and he replied with great vivacity.

I have reason to believe that the Premier of King Victor Emmanuel is satisfied to be able to say to the Piedmontese Parliament that he has thought of Italy, that his motion has been listened to with favour by the ministers of England and France: and has awakened the sympathy of Europe. I know that the Count Walewski is occupied in trying to reproduce this stormy discussion in the best aspect, and to eliminate from it all traces of the thorns and thistles, the invectives and resentments of the sitting.

'Milord,' said Cavour to Lord Clarendon, coming out of the Congress, 'you see that diplomacy will do nothing for us; it is therefore necessary to think of other means, at least as far as regards Naples.'

He paid a visit to Lord Clarendon subsequently, and briefly stated the case thus:—

That which has passed in the Congress proves two things: first, that Austria is decided to persist in her system of oppression and violence towards Italy; secondly, that the farces of diplomacy are impotent to modify that system. The consequences for Pied-

mont will be dreadful. With the irritation on our side, and the arrogance of Austria on the other, there are but two alternatives to take : reconcile ourselves to Austria and the Pope, or prepare to declare war at the Court of Vienna in a future not far distant. If the first part is preferable, I must on my return to Turin advise my king to call to power the friends of Austria and the Pope. If the second hypothesis is best, my friends and I will not shrink from preparing for a terrible war—a war to the death.

Lord Clarendon replied that he believed it was inevitable, but for the present it was best not to speak of it.

‘Milord,’ urged Cavour, earnestly, ‘I have given proofs of my moderation and prudence ; and I believe that in politics it is necessary to be excessively reserved in words and very decided in action. There are positions in which there is less peril in a bold course than a very prudent one. La Marmora thinks with me that before long we shall be able to make war, and you will have to aid us.’

‘Certainly, if you are in serious embarrassment you may count on our aid,’ replied the English plenipotentiary. Doubtless in speaking thus he meant to defend Piedmont from overt acts of aggression, and did not contemplate taking part in a national war of redemption ; but this last was plainly what Cavour meant, as he had dwelt more on the general state of Italy and Lombardy, and Venetia in particular, than the grievances of Piedmont against Austria.

In spite of the fact that the emperor still held back, and told the Sardinian minister to go to London and talk to Lord Palmerston before he would give him a decided answer, while the English Premier gave him to understand that they would be disposed to defend Piedmont only, not Italy, against Austria—Cavour felt that he had advanced the national cause not a little by openly declaring his country's wrongs before Europe.

For the first time Europe was informed officially—not by a conspirator or revolutionist, but by the minister of a king of one of the most ancient dynasties of Europe—that there existed an *Italian* question, and that means ought to be adopted to remove the cause of the disturbance which constantly threatened the peace of the continent.

The treaty of peace was signed on March 30, after which had followed the discussion on Italian affairs.

On April 29 the Sardinian minister returned to Turin, well pleased with himself as having done his country good service, and sure of a cordial reception from his king, whom he had kept informed of the minutest particulars of the Congress. He hastened to the palace immediately on his arrival to salute the king and give him the latest news. Victor Emmanuel embraced him, then caught both his hands and shook them repeatedly with a warmth of look and manner which spoke his thanks better than words. He immediately bestowed on him the Order of the Santissima Annunciata.

Russia and Piedmont having fought out their old

grudge in the Crimea, a sudden change of sentiment set in, and they became conciliatory to each other. The old empress came to spend the following winter at Nice, and the king went to see her and paid her the greatest civilities.

By June all the Sardinian troops were returned from the Crimea, that is, all that survived—about 4,000 had perished from cholera or in the field—and were received in Turin with enthusiastic applause. On the 16th the king held a grand review in the Piazza d'Armi—a solemn ceremony initiated by thanksgiving for the safe return of the army *in patria*. It was a very imposing spectacle in itself, and the emotions it excited made it more interesting. The king, accompanied by the English, French, and Turkish ambassadors and a brilliant staff, entered the Piazza, round which rose an amphitheatre of seats filled with spectators, and in the midst an altar where the bishop and clergy stood performing the service. The king listened to the prayers on horseback, looking, says his biographer, 'like the statue of his glorious ancestor, Emanuele Filiberto.' The service ended, Victor Emmanuel passed down the lines, amidst the ardent acclamations of the soldiers, who cried *Viva il Rè!* while the spectators added, *Viva l'esercito! Viva La Marmora!* The gallant general, who rode side by side with the king, was overcome with emotion when he thought of his brave soldiers sleeping in the Crimea, and among them his own brother. When the king had made the round of the Piazza he addressed the troops:—

Officers, Sub-officers and Soldiers!—Hardly a year has passed since I saluted you in sorrow, because I could not be your companion in this memorable undertaking. I meet you again with joy, and tell you you have deserved well of your country. You have responded worthily to my expectations, to the hopes of the country, and to the confidence of our powerful allies, who to-day give you a solemn testimony of it.

Firm in the calamity that afflicted a portion of you, dauntless in war, well-ordered always, you have increased the fame and influence of this elect part of Italy. I retake the banners that I consigned to you, and which you have brought back to me victorious from the East. I shall preserve them as a record of your fatigues, and as a sure pledge that when the honour and the interests of the nation oblige me to return them, they will again be defended by you on the field of battle with equal courage, and covered with new glories.

The king's address was received with immense enthusiasm on the part of both citizens and soldiers. The proceedings terminated by the king distributing the medals for military valour,—his own and those sent by Queen Victoria and the Emperor for the men specially distinguished in the Piedmontese army. All Italy was full of admiration and congratulation for the gallant little army of Piedmont which had so well maintained the national honour; and in spite of the jealous watchfulness of the governments, they subscribed

—Lombards, Venetians, Tuscans, Romans, Neapolitans  
—a sum to provide 100 cannons for the fortress of  
Alessandria.

The king promoted Alfonzo La Marmora to the highest rank, and loaded him with honours ; but he did not wish the general to resume his place in the Cabinet, because on some points they differed strongly. Cavour, however, persuaded the king that the uncompromising soldier's services were necessary, and he yielded. 'The king loves and esteems you sincerely,' wrote the count to his friend. And La Marmora loved and esteemed Victor Emmanuel ; nevertheless, they often disagreed.

'Now that you have resumed office,' said the king, 'I hope you will do as I wish.'

'Sire, I will do my duty, now as always,' was the proud reply. It was no idle boast. La Marmora's character commands even more admiration than his great talents—talents which are rarely found united with so much simplicity, modesty, and self-abnegation.

## CHAPTER XI.

CONTINUED DISAGREEMENTS WITH AUSTRIA.—MACHINATIONS OF THE CLERICALS AND SECTARIES. A.D. 1857-58.

TIME had not mitigated the burning sense of wrong which Piedmont felt towards Austria as the implacable enemy of her liberties ; nor the fear and hatred which Austria felt towards Piedmont as the head-centre of revolutionary doctrine subversive of her power in the peninsula. These hostile sentiments had settled into a chronic irritation, which at times broke out in fierce diplomatic conflicts.

Victor Emmanuel suffered from this suppressed rage against Austria more perhaps than any man in his kingdom. After the treaty of peace in 1849, he had tried hard to conquer it, and accept his fate with a good grace. For a few years a semblance of amicable relations was kept up, though they never exceeded the coldest courtesy. When the Archduke Albert of Austria expressed a desire to see his sister, the Queen of Sardinia, he was not invited to Turin for the purpose. Victor Emmanuel did not wish to entertain his obnoxious relative with false compliments ; all he would do was

to permit his wife to meet her brother on Lombard territory. With the queen's death every tie was severed, and Victor felt free to pursue the policy his inclination dictated, that inclination being uncompromising enmity towards Austria, as long as an Austrian soldier remained on Italian soil.

It is idle to deny that his soul was filled with this ambition of driving the foreigner out of Italy, from the day he ascended the throne. Of course his ministers did not avow it in diplomatic language, but *he* never concealed his wishes. 'They said Italy should have been my father's, and Italy shall be mine,' he said at the time of the Crimean War. We must remember this was after the Italian princes had all betrayed the national cause and united themselves with Austria. He kept alive and concentrated in himself the hopes of the national party; Lombards, Romans, Neapolitans, all agreed that the young King of Sardinia was the only man in Italy who could ever work out the redemption of their common country. This was reason enough to make him hated and feared by Austria, whose great aim was to prove Italy, what Prince Metternich said she was, a mere 'geographical expression.'

'The King of Sardinia,' wrote a Neapolitan minister to the Court of Vienna, 'only waits a favourable moment to put himself at the head of a revolutionary movement throughout Italy.'

So far they did him no wrong, for that was really his intention. But they did slander him and his government when they persisted in trying to convince



Europe that the king and his ministers organised and fomented conspiracies against the governments of other States; that political assassinations and all lawless deeds had their origin among the most well-ordered, well-conducted, loyal people in the peninsula, as the Piedmontese undoubtedly were. Nothing could be more contrary to Victor Emmanuel's policy and that of his great minister, than lawless violence, and secret conspiracies. His object was to *detach* the cause of Italy from Mazzinianism, and unite it in his own person with constitutional monarchy. It was absurd to suppose that the representative of an old hereditary sovereignty, like Victor Emmanuel, could be a revolutionist in the sense they said he was, to imagine that the head of the Savoy dynasty could think and act like a political adventurer who had no family name to sustain, a demagogue who had no position or character to lose. But the Austrian press, which once attacked Pio Nono as a demon of revolution, could not be expected to make nice distinctions with regard to Victor Emmanuel's Liberalism. He was opposed to Austrian rule in Italy, and that was enough to make those writers represent the King of Sardinia as a sort of brigand chief, who, though he maintained a savage discipline in his own State, recognised no international obligations and kept no faith with neighbouring princes.

These calumnies were partly believed till the Crimean war brought Piedmont into notice, and made her people and king better known throughout Europe. Cavour's agitation of the Italian question at the Congress of

Paris did much to enlighten the world, while it provoked the rulers of Austria beyond description. Renewed accusations and recriminations followed. The king's government was not remiss in replying that the disorders complained of had their origin in the bad system of administration pursued in the Italian principalities. The King of Naples and the Grand Dukes followed in the wake of Austria, and laid at the door of Victor Emmanuel every political offence perpetrated in their dominions.

The king [writes Cavour in one of his notes] repels every insinuation tending to generate the belief that he disturbs abroad, by means direct or indirect, that peace, that tranquillity, which he knows how to maintain constantly in his own state. It is not by the reasonable and temperate exercise of moderate liberty that disorders and insurrections are born. The history of Piedmont during these late years proves it clearly. The grand-ducal government knows by experience in how many circumstances Sardinia has efficaciously co-operated to impede disturbances, internal and external. . . . The king knows what international obligations mean, and fulfils them scrupulously.

Again, he says, in reply to an opposition member,—  
 We have always followed a frank, loyal policy without duplicity, and so long as we shall be at peace with other potentates we will not employ revolutionary means, nor ever seek to excite tumults or rebellions in their states.

If we had proposed to ourselves such an aim as the honourable Brofferio hinted ; if we had intended to send ships to aid revolutionary movements, before doing it we would have declared war. As to Naples, it is with pain that I reply to the hon. Brofferio. He has spoken of a very melancholy fact, the blowing up of a magazine of a ship of war, involving the loss of many lives—a horrid deed. He has spoken in a manner to lead one to believe that this act was the work of the Italian party. I deny the assertion boldly in the interest of Italy. No, gentlemen, these acts cannot be placed to the account of the national Italian party. They are the isolated acts of some deluded wretch, who may merit compassion, but must be stigmatised by all wise men ; and above all, by those who have at heart the honour and interest of Italy.

In the month of February, while Victor Emmanuel and Cavour were fighting these battles on Italian ground, a heavy misfortune from without came upon them, which both felt deeply. It was the defection of their best ally, in whom they trusted most, who had never misjudged them ; whose soldiers, only last year, had mingled their blood on the battle-field with that of the Piedmontese ; who had welcomed King Victor and his ministers with the warmest hospitality and most eager demonstrations of sympathy that could be imagined.

Suspensions of the French Emperor's fidelity had induced the British Government to form an alliance with

Austria, not without a protest from the more generous-minded portion of the nation. 'L'Italia era la vittima immolata sull' altare di tale riconciliazione,' says an Italian historian.

In the month of February the Neapolitan ambassador at London wrote to the king—strictly private—as follows :—

The English Government, firmly bound as it is at present to Austria, will not admit of a change of dynasty in the Two Sicilies. It has abandoned the protection of revolution in Italy, and renounced the idea of the independence of Sicily. Lord Clarendon assures me of this as a *gentleman*.

The word *gentleman*, italicised, is in English.<sup>1</sup>

This alliance was a heavy blow to the Italian cause. Even without the material aid which Lord Clarendon had led Count Cavour to expect at the termination of the Crimean War, the moral support of such a power as England was felt to be very important. It is true that the British Government undertook to make Austria behave better for the future ; and some amelioration of the condition of the Lombardo-Venetian provinces was due undoubtedly to English influence. An amnesty was granted to the banished Lombards, who had for the most part taken refuge in Piedmont, their confiscated property was restored, and the enlightened and benignant

<sup>1</sup> Archives of Foreign Affairs in Naples. See *Camillo Cavour, Documents Edited and Unedited*.

Archduke Maximilian sent as viceroy to conciliate the discontented inhabitants.

With these liberal measures towards Lombardy-Venice, Austrian fury against Piedmont raged more violently than ever ; and the most virulent attacks on the government appeared in the official gazette of Milan—attacks which Cavour never failed to answer with a proud defiance. To him the sudden clemency of the Vienna Government was only an artifice to win over the Lombards to the side of Austria in case of another war with Piedmont. That such a war was imminent he could no longer doubt, as great military preparations were constantly going forward near the frontier. At last diplomatic relations were broken off between the two countries. On March 22 the Austrian ambassador took his leave of the King of Sardinia, putting the affairs of his legation in the hands of the Prussian minister. The same day an order was sent to the Sardinian ambassador to quit Vienna, and leave *his* affairs in the hands of the French legation.

In order further to conciliate his Italian subjects, the Emperor Francis Joseph made a tour through the provinces ; but his welcome was strictly official ; he was received with chilling coldness everywhere. On the very day he entered the Lombard capital the official gazette of Turin announced that Milan was about to present a testimonial of esteem and regard to the Piedmontese army.

‘The decisive moment approaches,’ said Victor Emmanuel solemnly to Cavour. But though they knew

it to be inevitable, they did not wish to precipitate it too soon.

The difficulties which the Piedmontese Government laboured under were aggravated by another insurrectionary attempt of Mazzini, who, as usual, rushed forward to complicate still more the already too complicated state of affairs. This conspiracy being hatched at Genoa furnished the friends of despotic power with an argument against the Sardinian Government, and involved it in a tedious dispute with Naples, which lasted nearly a year.

The loss of the English alliance was somewhat compensated for in the increasing friendship of the Czar of Russia. Two of his brothers visited Victor Emmanuel at Turin, and brought him their sovereign's warmest assurances of regard. His mother, the widow of the late Emperor Nicholas, came to pass the winter at Nice, where the king visited her twice, and bestowed such delicate attentions upon her—she being in feeble health—that she declared him to be the most gallant prince in Europe; and before returning home in spring she paid a visit to Turin to thank him for his hospitality.

The King of Saxony was another royal guest whom Victor Emmanuel received during that winter. He was pleased to have an opportunity of showing a German prince how well ordered and contented his subjects were, and what progress they were daily making in civilised arts. Wherever a railway was to be opened or a foundation-stone laid, the king was sure to be there to

applaud and encourage the workers in their undertaking.

On August 30 Victor Emmanuel went to Ciamberi to inaugurate the opening of the Mont Cenis pass, and the following day he went to place the first stone of a bridge across the Rhone. He was received very warmly by the Savoyards; and amongst other deputations that waited on him was one composed of a number of noble ladies who had a petition to present. They were received with great courtesy, which gave them hope that their petition would not be rejected. It prayed his majesty to revoke the decree which had been issued a short time before, by the Minister of Public Instruction, to close the School of the Sacred Heart in Ciamberi, because the sisters refused to obey the law which required teachers to have a diploma.

The king's gallantry did not carry him so far. He frankly replied:—

‘I should be happy to do your ladyships any pleasure possible. But you must know that as a constitutional sovereign I must be the first to set an example of respect for the laws, and I cannot interfere.’

‘And where shall we have our daughters educated in future?’ asked one of the petitioners.

‘I can tell you where they will find instructors far superior to the *suore*. Educate your girls yourselves,’ said the king with a low bow to the deputation.

The ladies, baffled by the complimentary refusal, retired without further remonstrance.

Towards the end of the year 1857, the Parliament, now four years old, was dissolved. The general election which took place in November was seized upon as a grand occasion for the reactionary party to put their machinery in motion. In their efforts to overturn the Liberal government, the clergy did not scruple to make common cause secretly with the Mazzinian faction; and between the 'clericals' and the 'sectaries' the moderate government stood in a precarious position. Cavour writes despondingly at this time:—

Public affairs hold me in very great suspense. Abandoned by England, having in front of us Austria, malevolent and hostile, obliged to struggle against Rome and the other Italian princes—you can imagine how difficult our position is. . . . In spite of all, I am not quite discouraged, because I believe that the country is with us.

The elections, however, went against him, and it needed all his extraordinary ability to hold the ground he had gained so hardly, inch by inch, the last seven years. But the patience and perseverance of this great man were inexhaustible, and the king's courage and resolution indomitable.

In the king's speech at the opening of Parliament, he alluded briefly to 'the interruption of friendly intercourse with a neighbouring state,' without offering any explanation on the subject, or expressing any hope of a better understanding in the future. The fact was he did not hope it, and feeling that war was inevitable, he did



not choose to give utterance to any diplomatic regrets on the subject. Victor Emmanuel's speeches from the throne are stamped with the sincerity of his own character; though they were of course the composition of his ministers, he was particular to read them with care, so that nothing should be put into his mouth, as coming personally from him, of which he did not approve; and he often required an alteration or insertion of a phrase, and often added a paragraph.

'The ministerial responsibility covers me, I know,' he often said, 'but still I must think of my own conscience.'

Yet he was rarely at variance with his ministers; for if his objection to any measure was not perfectly just and reasonable, he was open to conviction, and ready to acknowledge himself wrong. Once the Minister of Public Instruction, Lanza, had a difference with the king on the subject of two nominations, which he had made in the colleges, of foreign professors—the Committee of Public Instruction having preferred two Piedmontese. The king sided with the committee, and refused to sign when presented with the nomination. Lanza respectfully argued the case, and put before the sovereign the bad policy and illiberality of not employing men of high ability, no matter whence they came; but as these men were Italians they were their own countrymen, and entitled to be regarded as Victor Emmanuel's subjects, since they entertained the same aspirations after national independence. The king convinced, took up his pen and signed, thanking his minister with a warm

shake of the hand for the frankness with which he had spoken.

At the end of this year, just a few days before the opening of Parliament, an illustrious senator, the Count Siccardi, died, leaving a grateful memory behind him of the services he had rendered his country, in carrying the anti-clerical laws in the face of such terrible difficulties.

The year 1858 opened inauspiciously by a criminal attempt, which threatened utter ruin to the Italian cause by estranging the power most disposed to befriend it. A young Italian, Felice Orsini, who had suffered much from Austrian oppression, and had been bred in the unwholesome air of secret societies, where he imbibed the pernicious doctrine of the justifiableness of tyrannicide—tried to destroy the French emperor on his way to the theatre, by the explosion of a sort of bomb, popularly called an 'infernal machine.' Fortunately the plot failed. Orsini and his two confederates were arrested and tried. It turned out that they had been in England just before, where they had planned the murderous attempt. England was then open to precisely the same charge as Piedmont had been with regard to the conspiracies conceived in Genoa by Mazzini. Free countries naturally become the refuge of political exiles; they come without any encouragement on the part of the rulers, for they are not desirable subjects. But as long as they respect the laws of the state, they are permitted to live in peace, and go away when they like; and it is impossible for the government to be

responsible for what projects they may design in the country, and perpetrate when they get out of it. Despotic rulers, however, always look with suspicion on neighbouring countries which enjoy more liberty than their subjects. And so the French emperor hurled the same reproaches at his late ally, as Austria had done at Piedmont. He called England 'a den of assassins.' British journals replied by reminding him of the *coup d'état*, and informing him that 'England loathed an assassin, whether killer of thousands or killer of one.' This was unkind, as the offence had been condoned when he was taken into the alliance, in consideration of his general good conduct after its perpetration, and the promise of future good faith and uprightness. But the fact was, that though he had won the queen's confidence and affection, the English nation never put perfect trust in him, and of late there had been a suspicion that the star of his destiny was moving in a northerly direction, and likely to stand still over the British Isles. So the indignation felt against him was general throughout the whole kingdom. Napoleon III. in his outcry against conspiracies seemed to have utterly forgotten the hospitality that England had once extended to him, a political exile, much addicted to conspiracy; and that he had gained the throne by a conspiracy even more culpable than Orsini's, bad as it was. His appeal to all the powers, however, called attention to the subject, and it was found that the secret societies were gaining ground to an alarming extent. The English Government sent information to the King of Sardinia that *his* life was also

threatened by the fanatical republicans, inspired by Orsini's example. Even in the city of Turin an article in one of the journals appeared apologising for the deed.

Victor Emmanuel and his advisers were deeply distressed by the unfortunate event. It seemed as if some perverse fate were trying to circumvent every effort to regenerate Italy. In order to neutralise the effect of Orsini's attempt on the mind of the emperor, Victor Emmanuel wrote him a long private letter, putting the case clearly before him, and earnestly entreating him not to condemn or abandon the nation for the misdeeds of a few fanatics. Cavour writes to a friend in profound melancholy at the prospect before him.

The present time is full of difficulties and dangers ; they augment daily. There is no longer any restraint on the fury of the sectaries, and their perversity increases the strength of the reaction, which becomes every day more threatening. In the midst of these opposite perils, what are the Liberals to do ? If they divide they are lost, and with them falls the cause of Italian liberty and independence. We shall stand in the breach imperturbable and resolute ; but fall we must, unless our friends group themselves round us to aid in our defence against the assaults that come from right and left.

A bill was introduced into the Piedmontese Parliament to define the offence of 'apologising for regicide,' and to punish more effectually the crime of conspiracy.

Orsini's death redeemed his life, and proved him to be one of those disinterested enthusiasts, whose fine nature had been warped by bad example and teaching. Penitent for his crime, he wrote a touching letter to the emperor, not asking for grace for himself, which he did not desire,—but humbly entreating aid for his beloved Italy. This letter was forwarded to Cavour, who had it published, with a few words of introduction from himself, pointing the moral.

The king requested Cavour to address a letter to the Papal Government, begging them to cease inundating the country with discontented subjects of the Holy See, and pointing out that the system of banishing every suspected person was most pernicious to the Roman States, and to Italy at large. 'Keep them at home; punish them if necessary, but keep them at home,' was, in brief, the burden of the missive.

This system of expulsion from their own state (writes Cavour)—exercised on so large a scale by the Pontifical Government, that in our state alone there are one hundred subjects of the Holy See—cannot but have dreadful consequences. The man exiled on suspicion, or because his conduct is not so good as it ought to be, is not always corrupt, or affiliated indissolubly with revolutionary factions. Kept in his own country under surveillance, or punished if necessary, he might mend his ways, or at least not become dangerous. But irritated by illegal measures, sent into exile, constrained to live outside respectable society, often without the means of

subsistence, he necessarily puts himself in relation with the fomenters of revolution. It is then easy for them to seduce him and bind him to their society. The exile, in short, becomes a sectary—often a very dangerous sectary.<sup>1</sup> Hence one can say, with reason, that the system followed by the Pontifical Government is calculated to swell the army of revolutionists. . . . To the measures adopted by the Holy See is to be attributed the extraordinary vitality of the Mazzinian party.

On March 14, which was the king's birthday, and also that of his eldest son Humbert, now fourteen, he conferred upon the prince the rank of captain in an infantry regiment, because he wished 'to attach him to the army whose perils and glories he should one day share, when the honour of the country required it.'

<sup>1</sup> In Italian, *settario* means simply member of a secret society, or sect, as they call it.

## CHAPTER XII.

'J'ATTENDS MON ASTRE.' A.D. 1858-9.

VICTOR EMMANUEL and Camillo Cavour, by a happy union of diplomatic ability, courage, and prudence,—not only lived down the slanderous attacks of their enemies, but turned the tables on them, and showed clearly to all Europe that while Piedmont was peaceful, contented, and loyal, all the other States of Italy were a prey to violent disorders, the result of gross misgovernment,—more especially the Two Sicilies and the States of the Church. We have not space here to dwell on the sufferings of the inhabitants of the kingdom of Naples and the Roman States ; but their condition presented a picture to excite indignation and pity.<sup>1</sup>

The Austrian provinces, hitherto much oppressed, now enjoyed a respite under the mild rule of the Archduke Maximilian. But this change of policy on the part of the conquerors did not mitigate one iota the sentiment of hostility which the natives felt towards them. No amount of conciliation could now win their

<sup>1</sup> See *I Casi di Napoli* (Massari). Gladstone, *On the Prisons of Naples*. *La Vita di Pio Nono* (Firentino).

hearts. They had suffered too much in the past; the iron had entered into their soul. And though Maximilian was personally popular, the firm resolve to banish the House of Hapsburg from Italian soil was stronger than ever in the hearts of the Lombards and Venetians. There was something noble in the indifference they showed to the material advantages offered them by the ruling race, and in the proud cold bearing with which they received the conciliations of a most amiable and fascinating prince, whose winning qualities had power to disarm hostility in the breasts of the most inveterate enemies of his house. Maximilian admired and respected their pride, and when he became an independent sovereign, eagerly sought the friendship of the Italian king, with whom he kept up the best relations to the end of his brief unhappy reign. This generous, just, and noble-minded prince deserved a better fate than that which his injudicious friend, Napoleon III., allotted to him as Emperor of Mexico.

Many illustrious exiles, who by no means came under the denomination of the *sectaries* and *conspirators* condemned by Count Cavour, had fled from the oppressed principalities, and received an hospitable welcome in the Sardinian states. These had seen the folly of partial and local revolutions, without proper guidance and discipline. They desired nothing more than a just amount of liberty under a constitutional monarchy, such as Piedmont enjoyed, but such as their sovereigns, they knew by experience, would never grant. They desired the next revolutionary movement to be an uprising of



all Italy to expel the foreigner and his satraps, and this movement to be led by a native prince. So they had come to centre all their hopes of regeneration on the one honest king in the peninsula, whose example seemed all the brighter because of the darkness by which he was surrounded.

These exiles had beset King Victor from the time he came to the throne with passionate appeals for help for their afflicted countries. Almost all the books written on the subject of Italian nationality, and narratives of the revolutions, were dedicated to him, or to the memory of his father. If he ventured to congratulate himself on the improving state of his kingdom and the contentment of his subjects, they did not fail to remind him that there were others of his Italian countrymen, who felt as loyally towards him, still groaning under an oppressive foreign yoke.

All this made a deep impression on his mind, stirred all his generous sympathies, and kept constantly alive in his soul the noble ambition which his father had bequeathed to him of accomplishing national emancipation. The decisive moment approached which Victor Emmanuel felt could no longer be postponed. It was now three years since, at the close of the Crimean War, Napoleon III. had asked that momentous question which thrilled his listener's heart, *Que peut-on faire pour l'Italie?* And nothing had been done, nor attempted.

Victor Emmanuel thought that it was time to represent to his ally that if he desired to do something for Italy, and take away the cause of a continual disturbance,

of the peace of Europe, the time had arrived. In obedience to a secret invitation, Count Cavour met the Emperor Napoleon, on July 20, at Plombières. The business was kept strictly private between the king and himself, so that no one knew the purport of the meeting till the end of the year. The result of that interview was calculated to raise Victor Emmanuel's hopes and fill his soul with glorious anticipations. In spite of the secrecy enjoined by his minister, he was heard to say in confidence, 'Next year I shall be King of Italy, or plain M. de Savoie.' Reviewing the troops in the Piazza d' Armi, the king, in speaking to a colonel, gave expression to some 'bellicose' words, which, being repeated and exaggerated, caused great disturbance in the diplomatic world, and brought down severe rebukes upon him. A few careless words to one of his own officers at a review, were criticised in the journals as a 'speech.' Indignation articles, even in France, were written upon the subject; and it was said that the unrestrained ambition of the Sardinian king, supported by his turbulent minister, threatened Europe with the calamities of war. Cavour, who had to act as a cork, bottling down the patriotic ardour of his king, entreated his majesty not to make such warlike speeches in public or private, since the eyes of Europe were jealously watching his every word and movement. But though he reproached his imprudence, no one admired the fiery spirit, which he alone knew how to rein in, more than Cavour himself.

Towards the end of the year 1858 another visit from the royal family of Russia showed increasing esteem

and cordiality on their part. The Grand Duke Constantine and his wife were such enthusiastic admirers of Victor Emmanuel and his state, that a Russian noble said they had become quite *Piedmontese*. The princess said to Cavour, 'In Russia we are proud to have such a friend as your king.'

The auspicious year 1859 opened with brighter prospects than the last. It was just ten years since Charles Albert had made up his mind to embark on that last fatal venture of his life which brought his country to the verge of destruction. *J'attends mon astre*, was the motto he had chosen; and unlucky as had been that star for him, his son still waited in the sure and certain hope that it would rise all glorious one day and reward his faith and patience. It had taken all those ten years for Victor Emmanuel, by constant strenuous effort, to recover the prestige lost in the campaign of 1849. But he had done it; and now that the ten years' armistice—which Count Balbo had called the Peace of Milan—was about to expire, he stood on the threshold of the new year, impatient for the moment when he might unsheathe the sword and wash out the memory of Novara.

The Parliament was to be opened January 10, and the king and his ministers were much exercised over the royal speech for a fortnight before it was to be delivered. Victor Emmanuel was disposed to throw down the gauntlet without further delay; he could not give utterance to language calculated to mislead the public. Cavour said they were not yet prepared for war, and it would be giving the enemy an unfair advantage to

announce their intentions so soon. 'Then, if I cannot speak clearly, better say nothing,' said the king; and the minister had much trouble in convincing him that he must say *something*. Piedmont—all Italy—expected to hear the voice of the king, and must not be disappointed. 'We will say all we can,' said Cavour. 'We must try and reconcile prudence with candour.'

'Well, then,' said Victor, at last yielding, as he generally did, to Cavour's convincing arguments, 'I will speak; but I wish it to be brief.' This all-important composition, which was to unite brevity and clearness, prudence and boldness, frankness and reticence—which was to give comfort and hope to the Italians, but not to give open offence to Austria—was found to be a very difficult task, and was not completed till the day before the opening of Parliament.

On New Year's day, the king, according to custom, received a number of deputations who came to wish him the compliments of the season. First there was the diplomatic body; and in conversing with them Victor Emmanuel was reserved and cautious, as he had promised Count Cavour he would be. It was some time since diplomatic relations with Austria had been broken, so he was not under the necessity of receiving a representative of that much-hated power. The new French ambassador was Prince La Tour d'Auvergne, who was struck with the king's good sense and dignity. '*J'admire l'élévation d'esprit avec laquelle le roi Victor cause des affaires*,' he said to Signor Massari coming out from the reception. With the senators and deputies he also

behaved admirably. But the magistrates unfortunately spoke of the important events of the past year, which drew from the king the remark that the year they were entering on might bear still more important ones. As soon as the deputation was gone he was seized with remorse ; and when Cavour entered the room, he came to meet him with a smile of compunction, saying,

‘Forgive me, I have done it!’

‘How, and with whom, your majesty?’ asked the Count in some anxiety.

‘In speaking to the magistrates.’

‘The magistrates!’ said Cavour, with his good-humoured laugh. ‘The most peaceable people in the world! How did you do it?’

‘Forgive me,’ said the king again. ‘I followed your advice as long as it was possible ; but I really could not keep in any longer.’

Cavour’s exquisite sense of humour was highly tickled at the incorrigibility of his royal pupil, and we can imagine him laughing till he had to take off his gold spectacles and wipe them, while the king joined heartily in the laugh against himself.

The glimpses we get of the intercourse between Victor Emmanuel and his illustrious minister convey the idea of perfect confidence, friendship and sympathy ; though they sometimes had sharp disputes on public questions.

Cabinet councils were held on January 8th and 9th in preparation for the opening of Parliament on the 10th, but still the speech of the Crown was unfinished, be-

cause it was so difficult to be bold and frank as the king required, and at the same time cautious and ambiguous as prudence dictated. The speech was in point of fact written out in a manner to satisfy the king, but the ministers still hesitated as to the advisability of allowing him to deliver it exactly as it was worded. The last paragraph, dealing with the Austrian difficulty, held the pith of the discourse ; it contained these words : ‘ While we respect treaties, we are not insensible to the cry of anguish (*grido di dolore*), which comes up to us from many parts of Italy.’ This was the king’s pet passage, which he clung to tenaciously ; and it was precisely the one that Cavour feared might convey too much meaning. The *grido di dolore* was still in the scales, when the evening before the opening of the Chambers a despatch from the French emperor, giving his entire approval, decided the matter.

The royal speech was brief, but it contained that which satisfied the king, ministers, Parliament, and nation. It became a memorable historic utterance, for the famous *grido di dolore* set all Italy on fire, and hastened the inevitable breach with Austria. The king was up at daybreak on the morning of the 10th, reading over the speech, and making some trifling alterations. Then he read it aloud to Count Cavour, to see that his tones gave the proper signification to the words. He had, unfortunately, a sore throat, and he said, laughing with his usual jocularly, ‘ I am afraid that with this confounded sore throat the first tenor will not sing his part well.’

As he ascended the stairs of the Palazzo Modama a deputation of senators came to meet him, according to custom ; and to one he was particularly fond of, he said with a happy smile, 'Dear Ciprario, you will hear nice things!' The Chamber presented an unusually festive appearance, and was crowded to excess.

Nothing was known of the policy for the coming year, and everyone was impatient to hear the royal utterance, seeming to expect something more than an ordinary 'king's speech,' a mere rehearsal of facts already well known to the public.

His majesty took his seat on the throne amid loud applause ; but when he opened the paper he was about to read, there was a sudden profound silence ; all awaited with eager impatience the words about to fall from his lips. He held his audience in suspense another minute, while he swept the assembly with a flashing eye which revealed the excitement of his mind.

Gentlemen Senators, Gentlemen Deputies,—The new Legislature, inaugurated a year ago, has not disappointed the hopes of the country nor my expectations. By means of an enlightened and loyal concord we have been enabled to surmount the difficulties that beset our policy external and internal, thus rendering more solid those broad principles of nationality and of progress on which our liberal institutions repose. Following on the same road this new year, you will be able to accomplish improvements in the various

branches of the legislation and of the public administration. In the past session there were presented to you various projects for amending the administration of justice. Resuming the interrupted examination, I trust that in this you will be able to provide for the re-ordering of the magistracy, the courts of assizes, and the court of procedure. You shall be called again to deliberate on the reform of the administration of the communes and of the provinces. The lively interest that the subject awakes will be an incitement to dedicate to it your special care.

There shall be proposed to you some modifications of the laws of the National Guard. In order to preserve the basis of this noble institution intact, and render it more efficacious at all times, it is necessary to introduce some improvements suggested by experience.

The commercial crisis from which our country has not been exempt, and the calamity which repeatedly strikes our principal industry, diminishes the income of the State, and prevents us for the present realising the hope of equalising the expenses with the public revenues. That will not prevent you—in the examination of the future balance-sheet—from trying to reconcile the needs of the state with the principles of a severe economy.

Gentlemen Senators, Gentlemen Deputies,—The horizon in which the new year rises is not quite serene. That notwithstanding, you will apply yourselves



with your usual alacrity to your parliamentary labours:

Strengthened by the experiences of the past, we will go resolutely forward to meet the future. This future will be happy, if we repose our policy on justice, on the love of liberty and of country.

Our country, small in territory, has acquired credit in the councils of Europe, because she is great in the idea she represents, in the sympathy that she inspires. This situation is not exempt from perils, for, *while we respect treaties, we are not insensible to the cry of anguish that comes up to us from many parts of Italy.* Strong in concord, confident in our good right, we await with prudence and resolution the decrees of Divine Providence.

To appreciate the thrilling effect produced by this discourse, we must remember that it was quite new to the audience. They had not been behind the scenes 'assisting' at the composition of it, nor known how long that *grido di dolore*, which went straight to their hearts, had been under discussion in the Cabinet. And though the king read the speech which everyone knew had been prepared for him, there was a fire and animation in his look and tone as he delivered it, which made it seem the spontaneous expression of feeling which rushed from the heart to the lips of the royal speaker. The scene in the assembly must be described in the vivid language of an Italian eye-witness<sup>1</sup> :—

<sup>1</sup> Massari, Neapolitan, author of a *Life of Cavour*, a *Life of Victor Emmanuel*, and now about to bring out a *Life of La Marmora*.

At every period the speech was interrupted by clamorous applause, and cries of '*Viva il Rè!*' But when he came to the words, *grido di dolore*, there was an enthusiasm quite indescribable. Senators, deputies, spectators, all sprang to their feet with a bound, and broke into passionate acclamations. The ministers of France, Russia, Prussia, and England were utterly astonished and carried away by the marvellous spectacle. The face of the ambassador of Naples was covered with a gloomy pallor. We poor exiles did not even attempt to wipe away the tears that flowed copiously, unrestrainedly from our eyes, as we frantically clapped our hands in applause of that king who had remembered our sorrows, who had promised us a country. Before the victories, the plébiscites, and the annexations conferred on him the crown of Italy, he reigned in our hearts ; he was our king !

Before the day was done the speech was repeated by thousands of lips ; it passed like an electric shock from one end of the peninsula to the other. It was quoted by hundreds of writers and speakers, both friends and enemies, with the passionate comments which their respective feelings dictated.

The comments of the *Codini*, condensed, read somewhat in this style : 'Threatening language of the Sardinian king ; boundless ambition, unscrupulous as to means ; nothing sacred that blocks his way ; ready to plunge Europe into a bloody war to gratify insatiable desire for dynastic aggrandisement,' etc., etc.

The *Liberali*, on the other hand, with rapturous applause, spoke their gratitude to the honest king and daring soldier, who had lent an ear to their cry of anguish. He had spoken like a patriot prince, whose Italian heart was still the same as when he led the forlorn hope of Piedmont against the Austrian guns at Novara. Ten years of patient endurance had not changed his sentiments; he was still theirs—Italy's—the champion of their liberties, the first soldier of Italian independence. Under the banner of such a leader, who would not be proud to enrol himself? *Viva Vittorio*, the gallant, the loyal, and the true! *Viva Casa Savoia*!—these and like expressions were heard on all sides.

They prepared themselves for war; the young men in the different States collected all the little wealth that they might without exciting the suspicion of their governments, and quietly took their way northwards to be ready at a moment's notice. Amongst these were nobles of the highest rank, some nephews of cardinals, and one nephew of the prime minister of Tuscany. Every town sent its contribution of a gallant little band to the national war, which was expected even sooner than it actually broke out.

Victor Emmanuel had to pay a good price for the alliance of the French Emperor. Two sacrifices he had to make which wounded his heart deeply, and which nothing but the cause of Italy, which absolutely depended on those sacrifices, would have induced him to accomplish. The Bonaparte family desiring much to connect themselves with the ancient dynasties of Europe,

a marriage was proposed between the emperor's cousin, Prince Napoleon Jerome, and Clotilde, the eldest child of Victor Emmanuel, then not much past fifteen years. The princess was a bright girl, with a mind matured beyond her years, full of maternal care for her brothers and sisters, and devotedly attached to her father, who loved her tenderly. The first mention of the marriage the king met with a repugnance which could not be overcome. To separate his child at so tender an age from all family ties, and give her to a man who had more than twice her years, was an idea which he could not entertain. But the statesmen returned again and again to the subject, and he was given to understand that this matrimony must be a condition of the French alliance. The king consulted the opinion of all the men he most esteemed, and laid the whole matter before them. They admired the strength of his paternal affection, but naturally thought more of the national welfare than the happiness of the princess ; and expected that a king should sacrifice personal feelings for the public good. At last Victor Emmanuel, with a heavy heart, said to his minister, 'You have convinced me of the political reasons which render this marriage useful and necessary to our cause. I yield to your arguments, but I make a great sacrifice in so doing. My consent is subject to the condition that my daughter gives hers freely.'

It was not in the nature of things that a young girl should receive this proposal with a good grace. Her father would not urge her, but Cavour was there, who

knew how to play upon the finest chords of the human heart with the most skilful and delicate touch. The princess was convinced that, to be worthy of the noble race from which she sprung, she must sacrifice herself for the honour of that house, the love of her father, the redemption of her country. She was Victor Emmanuel's daughter—with all his generous pride of race and love of country—and she consented. Cavour, wily diplomatist as he was, had a warm heart, and when he related the scene to a friend, and described the noble bearing of the young girl, his eyes were filled with tears.

'I have the hope that my good daughter will be happy,' said the king, trying to persuade himself that the marriage would turn out well. The ceremony took place on January 29, and the wedded couple set out for France at once. The bride was accompanied by ladies of the Sardinian court, and the king went as far as Genoa, to see them embark. It was a bitter moment to Victor Emmanuel; the princess could hardly tear herself from her father's arms, and he broke down utterly in saying the last farewell.

Among the wedding presents which the king bestowed on the day of the marriage, was a very handsome ring which he gave to Count Cavour. 'Your majesty knows I have no wife—nor will I ever take one,' observed the minister, apropos of rings.

'*La sua sposa è la Patria.* I know it,' replied the king gracefully.

The other sacrifice which Victor Emmanuel was called upon to make was the cession of Nice and Savoy

to France, in return for her aid in helping to liberate North Italy 'from the Alps to the Adriatic,' as the emperor expressed it. It was a bitter trial to him to have to surrender the cradle of his race, from which his dynasty took its title; but nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of national independence. The treaty of alliance was signed January 18, by Prince Napoleon and General Neil on the part of France, and Count Cavour and General La Marmora on the part of Sardinia. It was kept strictly secret, as the emperor bound himself to aid the king only in case of Austria being the aggressor. Victor Emmanuel's patience was at its last ebb; Austria had the power of tormenting him in a thousand ways without absolutely invading his dominions. But still his allies preached patience to him. '*Il faut attendre, sire,*' said General Neil. '*J'attends depuis dix ans, Général,*' was the brief but pregnant reply.

The marriage of the Princess Clotilde following close on the warlike speech of the king had a significance which the diplomatists were quick to understand. Austria had already made military preparations on a large scale; Piedmont now did likewise. The volunteers from all parts of Italy hastened to the Subalpine capital; and the prince of volunteers, Giuseppe Garibaldi, put his sword at the command of the Sardinian king, whose born subject he was, though he had earned his great military renown in the service of republics in divers parts of the world. All minor differences of opinion were at that moment forgotten by every sincere

lover of his country. Lombardy and Venetia, particularly, were in a state of wild excitement; the youth of every class in those provinces flocked in great numbers to the standard of Victor Emmanuel. Ladies of rank gave their money, jewellery, and articles of luxury; poor women made a sacrifice of their every comfort to aid the national cause; all encouraged and animated their male relatives to join the Sardinian army. And it was marvellous to see how quickly, at the first scent of war, the luxurious, pleasure-loving nobles left their palaces, villas, horses, and carriages a prey to Austrian greed, and betook themselves with cheerful alacrity to the life of privation and hardship which is the lot of an Italian soldier.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE FIRST SOLDIER OF ITALIAN INDEPENDENCE.

A.D. 1859.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the preparations for war on the part of the belligerents, each equally eager to attack the other, four months elapsed before the first gun was fired. These months were consumed in vain but strenuous efforts on the part of England, Prussia, and Russia to accommodate matters peacefully. Towards the end of January the Austrian minister, Count Buol, sent a despatch to the London ambassador, in which he tried to prove that the King of Sardinia was responsible for all the discontent and disorder of the peninsula; and proposing that the great powers should unite to make Piedmont modify her institutions. The indignation of Victor Emmanuel when he heard of this attempt to undermine him, knew no bounds. It was like bearding a lion in his den to hint at meddling with the constitution of his state. Piedmont at least was his, and should enjoy that freedom for which he and his father had fought, and shed their subjects' blood. Sooner than surrender it, they would die at the foot of their Alps, or 'all go to America.'



Cavour, however, was a match for Count Buol. In reply to a question of Lord Derby as to what was the best expedient to pacify Italy and improve her state, he sent a memorandum, which was an able indictment against Austria for her unjust usurpations in Italy, and a rehearsal of all the efforts made by her to annihilate the independence of the Italian principalities, and showed that she desired to have Piedmont, like the rest, absolutely subject to her despotic will. He turned the tables upon Austria completely, accusing her of being the cause—the sole cause—of all the ills of the unhappy country. He demonstrated clearly that the only way to save Italy from continually recurring revolutions was to grant a home government to Lombardy and Venetia, to oblige the other states to have a constitutional form, and to preclude the possibility of Austrian intervention.

In another despatch to the young Marquis d'Azeglio—nephew of Massimo—who was Piedmontese ambassador in London, Cavour said that he admitted the liberty of Piedmont was a continual danger to Austria; but Austria, having violated conditions in substance and in spirit, had now come to encircle Piedmont with a cordon of iron, watching for a convenient opportunity to uproot her liberal institutions. Could and ought Piedmont to await with stupid resignation the accomplishment of such an end?

On this Austria cleverly retreated a little, confessing that reforms were needed in the principalities, and that she had already initiated them in Lombardy-Venice;

and intimating that she was willing to be further guided by the advice of England.

A European congress for the adjustment of Italian affairs was then proposed ; and Austria put in motion every influence to induce the great powers to insist on Sardinia disarming before it took place. The first article of the Austrian declarations for the consideration of the Congress was: 'To examine what would be the best means to lead Sardinia back to the fulfilment of her international duties, and to take measures to avoid a return of the present complications.' The other governments tried to induce Piedmont to disarm for the sake of peace, and urged France to use her influence with her ally for the same end.

The Piedmontese government listened to these counsels as a man would to a friend who advised him in a kindly manner to commit suicide. Disarm ! they said, while Austria, who had first prepared for war, was armed to the teeth ! Impossible, utterly impossible. The great powers, though friendly for the most part towards Italy, were bent on maintaining peace at any price. France, though bound by secret treaty to Piedmont, dare not stir unless Austria made some fresh aggressive movement. Friends and enemies all seemed united to crush the independence of poor little Piedmont. But her brave king and his incomparable minister held their heads erect, while diplomatic notes were flying in every direction, piling difficulties on difficulties.

The next Austrian move was to get the governments

to consent to exclude Piedmont, as a secondary power, from the Congress.

Count Cavour's reply to this notification was full of deep indignation at the injustice of his late allies, who could forget what they owed to a state which four years before had lost 4,000 men and spent 50,000,000 francs, to maintain European equilibrium. He added that, since Piedmont must have no part in the Congress, she would hold herself free to take such measures as she thought best to maintain her rights. By way of ceding something, Austria proposed that both countries should keep an armed force near the frontier ready for 'accidental aggressions.' Piedmont, at the earnest request of England, promised that if no fresh Austrian troops were sent into Italy, King Victor would not call out the reserves, nor hold the standing army in the defensive position it had occupied during the last three months. Fresh obstacles and difficulties and bushels of notes followed.

England at last notified to the government of Turin that she had obtained the consent of the other powers that a Sardinian plenipotentiary should be admitted to the Congress, 'but to treat only of the question of disarmament.' Count Cavour replied, rejecting the concession, as humiliating to his king and his country. He was worn out with the diplomatic war, and in March went to pay a visit to the emperor to try and bring matters to a conclusion.

Before returning to Turin he made a tour through Switzerland and Germany. He was received very

well in Prussia ; and everywhere as he passed on his journey he met with demonstrations of sympathy. He writes to a colleague : ' Austria, thank God, by her bad faith, has alienated all the continent from her.' The Turin people met their illustrious fellow-citizen at the railway with a grand demonstration, and nearly pulled him out of the carriage in the excitement of their feelings, and joy at seeing his broad, smiling face again amongst them. They followed him with loud applause to his palace, and he had to come out on the balcony to thank the people before they dispersed.

Next morning the hero of this ovation was describing it to the king in glowing colours—for he was not afraid of making him jealous—when his majesty interrupted him, laughing :—

' My dear Count, you need not tell me. I know all about it better than you do. When you were on the balcony I was in the street, lost in the crowd, shouting *Viva Cavour* ! with the rest.'

There is a charming touch of nature in this little incident, which gives one an idea of what a pleasant king to serve was this appreciative warm-hearted Victor, who was not afraid of derogating from his royal dignity by sometimes mingling with his people as one of them, and entering into their feelings.

He used often to go about in disguise, not only in the mountain districts, where he was comparatively unknown, but even in Turin. A gentleman encountering him one evening in the street, asked him to let him light his cigar with his, and in offering the desired courtesy

the king came near enough to be recognised by his surprised interlocutor.

In the days of his youth he had suffered so much boredom from the rigid etiquette of his father's court, that he was all the more inclined to disregard it when he became king.<sup>1</sup>

Count Cavour returned from his trip with renewed vigour for the contest which was not yet ended. England, bent on maintaining peace, made another effort with France to induce her to insist on a simultaneous disarmament; and at the same time used her influence so strongly with the other powers as to make them admit a Sardinian plenipotentiary, *on equal grounds*, at the Congress.

This proposition the emperor could hardly object to, so he telegraphed to Turin his advice to accept. Cavour did not reply immediately, because of secret information he had received as to the warlike intentions of Austria. He waited, and, as he had been led to expect, on April 19, 1859, the Austrian ultimatum reached Turin: immediate disarmament or war, with three days to decide.

<sup>1</sup> One little incident will serve to show the severe restraint under which the Savoy princes were held in those days. Weary of ceremony and state, Prince Victor, one evening, soon after his marriage, conceived the bold design of taking his wife for a walk alone, like a simple citizen. The Princess Adelaide, doubtless, thought it a pleasing adventure to elude the vigilance of maids of honour and gentlemen-in-waiting, and escape from the palace on her husband's arm. The young people were recognised of course, and the scandalised courtiers hastened to tell the king that the Duke of Savoy and his bride were seen promenading in the city, on foot, and unattended! The prince was severely rebuked for the offence, and ordered not to leave the palace for some days.

It was a relief to both king and minister. The quarrel had passed from the jurisdiction of diplomacy to the arbitrament of the sword, and the soldier-king buckled on his armour with a feeling of solemn satisfaction. He had 'awaited his star,' and now it rose, beckoning him on to glory. On April 23, the Parliament decreed that the troops were to be put in motion immediately for the frontier of Lombardy, and that the supreme command should be confided to their valiant and beloved sovereign. While the Parliament was applauding Cavour's speech, the Austrian plenipotentiaries empowered to receive the reply of the Sardinian government arrived. They were answered by the martial aspect of the city, even before official response could be communicated. Prince Carignano was nominated regent in the king's absence, and when Victor Emmanuel put his signature to the document, he threw down the pen with a sigh of relief, saying, 'Now I shall sign nothing more!' He made his will, and gave minute instructions to those who remained in charge of affairs at home, as to what should be done in the event of his fall.

*Royal Proclamation to the People of the Kingdom.*

Austria assails us with a powerful army, which, while simulating a desire for peace, she had collected for our injury in the unhappy provinces subject to her domination.

Not being able to endure the example of our civilised institutions, nor wishing to submit to the judg-

ment of a European congress on the evils and dangers she has caused in Italy, she now violates the promise given to Great Britain, and makes a law of honour a cause for war.

Jealous custodian of our common patrimony of honour and glory, I take up my sword again, confiding the state to the rule of my beloved cousin Prince Egenio (Carignano).

With my soldiers, the valiant soldiers of the Emperor Napoleon III., my generous ally, will fight the battles of liberty and justice.

People of Italy! Austria assails Piedmont because I have maintained the cause of our common country in the councils of Europe,—because I was not insensible to your cries of anguish. Thus, she violently breaks now the treaties which she never has respected.

So to-day the right of the nation is complete, and I can, with a free conscience, fulfil the vow I made on the tomb of my parent, by taking up arms to defend my throne, the liberties of my people, the honour of the Italian name. I fight for the right of the whole nation.

We confide in God and in our concord; we confide in the valour of the Italian soldiers, in the alliance of the noble French nation; we confide in the justice of public opinion.

I have no other ambition than to be the first soldier of Italian Independence. Viva l'Italia!

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

*Order of the Day.*

Soldiers!—Austria, who at our confines concentrates armies and threatens to invade our territories, because here liberty is united with order; because not force, but harmony and affection between sovereign and people, rule the state; because here has been heard the cry of anguish from oppressed Italy;—Austria dares to intimate to us, armed only on the defensive, that we must lay down our arms, and put ourselves at her mercy. The outrageous proposal should have a suitable response. I have replied to it with scorn.

Soldiers!—I give you this announcement, sure that you will make it yours, this insult to your king and country. The announcement that I make is, war. To arms then, soldiers! You will find yourselves in front of an enemy who is not new. But if he is valiant and well-disciplined, you need not fear the comparison. You can boast the days of Goito, Pastrengo, Santa Lucia, Sommacompagna—ay, even Custoza itself—where only four brigades fought for three days against five different bodies of troops.

I shall be your leader. In former times I have seen most of you in the fervour of battle, when I fought by the side of my magnanimous father, and I admired and felt proud of your valour. You, I am sure, will know how to preserve and increase the fame of those days. You shall have with you the intrepid French soldiers, conquerors in so many great battles,—



who were your companions at the Tchernaya, and whom Napoleon III., always ready to defend a just cause, sends to our aid.

March, then, confident of victory, and wreath your banner with fresh laurels—that banner with its three colours, under which the chosen youth of all Italy ranges itself, indicates to you that yours is the task of accomplishing Italian Independence. This just and sacred enterprise shall be our cry of war.

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

Turin, April 27, 1859.

The day before his departure from the capital the king called Count Nigra, minister of the household, to give him his instructions. ‘Signor Nigra,’ he said, ‘we are near great events, and we must prepare for every eventuality. I confide to your care all that is most dear to me—my children. I know I leave them with another self.’

‘Your majesty may go in peace. I will be answerable for all’ was the reply.

‘Here is my testament,’ pursued the king. ‘If I should be killed, open it, and see that my will is executed. I will try to bar the road to Turin, but if I should not succeed, and the enemy advances, remove my family to a place of safety, and follow scrupulously what I tell you. In the Gallery of Arms you will find four Austrian banners taken by our soldiers in the war of 1848, and deposited there by my father. They are the trophies of his glory, and I wish to preserve them. If need be, abandon everything else—valuables, jewels, archives, collections—all contained in my palace,—but save the

banners. Let me but find my children and them safe, the rest does not matter.'

Next morning, before marching, a solemn service was held in the Duomo, which was crowded with excited citizens, more bent on admiring the spectacle of the warrior king kneeling before the altar, asking Heaven's blessing on his enterprise, than on attending to their own particular devotions. He departed at the head of his troops amidst enthusiastic acclamations, and fervent blessings and prayers for his safety and success. So was he received in every village through which he passed till he reached the great fortress of Alessandria, where the troops were concentrating.

The ten years of peace had not diminished Victor Emmanuel's military ardour, though they had brought him more experience and heavier responsibilities. His devotion to the cause of Italy was as warm as when on the field of Novara he had fiercely sworn, '*Italia sarà !*' The enthusiasm which filled his soul imparted a dignity and grandeur to his bearing, and—his homely features notwithstanding—made him look all a king.

'It was fine,' says Bersezio, 'to see him ride up the ranks of his soldiers, or in the midst of his people as he returned with dignity their enthusiastic *evvivas* ; but finest when in the heat of battle he flung himself with impetuous valour upon the enemy.'

It was not only his own subjects and soldiers who were stirred into enthusiasm at the sight of the hero-king. A French officer who saw him for the first time on his arrival at Alessandria thus writes :—

A great noise was raised ; we heard the tramp of horses and cries of enthusiasm. Certainly some great man must be coming ! In fact, in a minute after I saw enter under the portico of the palace, King Victor Emmanuel. I recognised his countenance by the rugged features, such as one sees at any humble fireside. There was that eye, ardent yet soft, which darted a straight, bold glance over a provokingly aggressive pair of moustaches. I leave it to others to cite this prince or that, named in the pages of history. But henceforth from to-day I will think that a king on horseback in a moment of danger is a sight to make the heart beat. Lamartine has said, 'Horses are the pedestals of princes.' . . . Whatever happens, I shall never forget King Victor Emmanuel as I first saw him, on horseback, with his sabre by his side, breathing freely and joyously the warrior air of Alessandria, as an atmosphere suited for his lungs. Other memories as well as mine will preserve this image, and in the minds of the people an image is a judgment.

General La Marmora, knowing the king's rash spirit, ventured to remonstrate with him about exposing himself to danger, and Victor, unlike himself, answered rudely, that if the general felt afraid he might keep in the background. This was an outburst of temper, caused by the worry he had been subject to, since war had been declared, on the duty of taking care of himself. La Marmora and other friends persuaded a senator, Plezza, who was royal commissioner at Alessandria, to remon-

strate with him in the name of all. 'Say to those gentlemen,' replied the king, 'that in a few days I must send to death who knows how many thousand men. I have not the courage to send them to meet death if I do not act so as to let them see that the cause is such as deserves that we ought all to meet it if need be, and that I myself am ready to do so.' This reply of the king, being repeated from mouth to mouth, had a powerful and inspiring effect on the soldiers.

At San Salvador the Sardinian army was in danger of being surrounded by the enemy; a sort of panic seized the men, and Victor Emmanuel, acting under the advice of some of his officers, had decided to make a retrograde movement. La Marmora, hearing this, forced his way into the royal chamber in spite of orders that no one was to be admitted, and protested vehemently against a retreat. Angry words were exchanged, and the general wound up by saying that if the army retreated he would not, as he would rather fall into the enemy's hands than be the scorn of Frenchmen. In consequence of this the king delayed the departure of the troops, and next day the panic passed, when news arrived that the French were coming to their assistance. Victor Emmanuel then behaved like himself, and penned an affectionate and apologetic letter to his general, thanking him for his timely opposition.

On May 13 the French Emperor landed at Genoa, whither the king went to meet him. The French troops were greeted with great warmth in all the towns through which they passed. The Piedmontese people fêted

them and bestowed presents on them just as they did on their own men ; and the two armies fraternised most satisfactorily.

Between the sovereigns also a warm friendship sprang up, which there is every reason to believe was sincere on both sides. Napoleon III. was capable of a faithful and lasting friendship, and had a wonderful knack of winning the regard of those who had intimate intercourse with him, as we can see in the 'Life of the Prince Consort,' where the queen describes with charming simplicity his growing influence on her and her husband.

Victor Emmanuel felt the emperor's fascination, and quickly grew to like him personally, while on public grounds he experienced the strongest sentiments of gratitude for the aid he was rendering to his country when all other sovereigns refused to help her. It was not in Victor Emmanuel's nature to inquire if the emperor were or were not guided by selfish, ambitious motives ; enough for him that he befriended Italy in her distress ; and the memory of that service never could be obliterated from his mind, though his patience was often sorely tried by the conduct of his 'generous ally.'

## CHAPTER XIV.

'ITALY SHALL BE FREE FROM THE ALPS TO THE  
ADRIATIC!' A.D. 1859.

MEANTIME the Austrians, assembled in great force on the frontier, at the first intimation of war crossed the Ticino and began to devastate the Sardinian territory. The king's troops were commanded to flood the country in order to impede the enemy's advance on the capital. In this work the peasant-farmers took an active part, eagerly assisting the soldiers in the destruction of their own crops. It was a great sacrifice for the poor people, but in that moment of exalted enthusiasm they were ready to sacrifice not only their harvest but their lives, for *la patria*.

It was a happy thought this of inundating the country; for the enemy began to advance rapidly into the interior, and for several days Turin was threatened with an attack. The government was in the hands of the Prince of Carignano, who, aided by the energetic services of the citizens, and those old nobles who had not gone to the seat of war, made haste to put the city in a state of defence. The king was in great anxiety, and

kept up a constant correspondence with the capital till the danger was passed. The courage and quiet resolution displayed by the whole population of Turin was very gratifying to Victor Emmanuel, who expressed his feelings in a letter to the old General de Sonnaz, who was in command of all the forces that could be mustered together for the defence of the city.

Your Excellency,—The noble, patriotic, and valiant conduct that you have displayed in these past days when the capital was threatened by a raid from the enemy, during which time you collected together such forces as were available, and enrolled them with the division of cavalry,—I appreciated so highly that I experienced a lively desire to express to your excellency my great satisfaction and earnest thanks. This bold act, spontaneous as it was, is a new proof of that constant devotion to the throne of which my father and I have had so many evidences in times past ; and another gem added to the brilliant services which entitle your excellency to my particular goodwill, and to the esteem and gratitude of the country and army.

To-day, since the peril which menaced the capital is passed, your excellency can resume the command of the military division of Turin, and I will rest in the firm confidence that if there should arise any grave trouble, the country and the king may count on the arm and the heart of your excellency—a heart and an arm which never grow old.

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

Occimiano, May 18, 1859.

For some time before the war, the great body of volunteers had been put under the command of General Garibaldi. They had taken the field before the royal troops, and in several encounters with the enemy on the Po, had come off victorious—a fact which greatly cheered the spirits of the Piedmontese.

On May 20, at Montebello, took place the first encounter of the allied armies with the Austrian, and so far as it went it was a brilliant success. On May 30th, that is, the eleventh anniversary of Goito, where Victor Emmanuel first distinguished himself, there was fought a more important battle. At Palestro the Austrians had collected strong forces to oppose the passage of the Piedmontese across the Sesia. General Cialdini attacked them with great energy at one point, and General Fanti at another, while the king, who directed the movements of all, seeing his men swept down rapidly by the terrible Austrian fire, led on a third division, passed the bridge with overwhelming impetus, and assailed Palestro with a fury before which the enemy had to give way. On receiving fresh succours the Austrians returned to the combat, and twice drove the Piedmontese back, but twice had to yield in their turn. In all the three different points the Austrians were ultimately forced to retreat, and the Italians remained in possession of the position.

*Royal Proclamation.*

Soldiers!—Our first battle signalises our first victory.  
Your heroic courage, the admirable order of your



lines, the daring and sagacity of your leaders, have triumphed to-day at Palestro, Vinzaglio, and Casalino. The enemy, repeatedly attacked, after an obstinate defence, abandoned the strong positions into your hands. This campaign could not open under happier auspices. The triumph of to-day is a pledge that future victories are reserved for the glory of your king, and the fame of the valiant Piedmontese army.

Soldiers, your exultant country expresses through me her gratitude, and, proud of your battles, she adds to her story the names of her heroic sons, who for the second time on the memorable day of May 30 have successfully and valiantly combated for her.

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

The Austrians, knowing the importance of the village of Palestro, returned at daybreak next morning with all the fresh forces they could collect to try to retake it. As Victor Emmanuel, armed for the affray, was about to leap to the saddle, he paused one moment to send a line to his dear Cavour—

‘You must be pleased with the news of yesterday evening. I am mounting my horse. This evening you shall receive other good news.’

The Austrians, wishing to regain the positions lost the day before, took the offensive, and fought with a desperate resolve to gain the day; the Italians, with an equally desperate tenacity, were resolved to cede those valuable posts only with their lives.

It was an obstinate and bloody battle. The Italians,

fighting furiously and falling in great numbers, were almost surrounded and overwhelmed, when the Zouaves came to the rescue and, with a dauntless bravery, threw themselves on the enemy and made themselves masters of the cannons. Inspired by the help of their gallant allies, the Italians renewed the attack with great vigour, all the more courageously that just then Victor Emmanuel, 'plunged in the battery's smoke,' was seen galloping to the front, sword in hand, waving on Italians and French to the defence of a bridge. The sight of their king inspired the Piedmontese with fresh ardour; and the Zouaves, with the cry of *Vive l'Empereur*, threw themselves precipitately along with them upon the enemy, and a furious contest ensued, in which the day for a long time remained doubtful.

The Zouaves were lost in admiration of Victor Emmanuel's gallantry. He was the first of Zouaves, they said, for 'he would listen to no reason.' The French standard-bearer fell at his feet, struck by two balls; and he rushed on into the thickest fire, deaf to the remonstrances of the Zouaves, who entreated him to withdraw a little in the background. The idea of thinking of his own life at such a moment was out of the question for Victor Emmanuel; but the 'First Soldier of Italian Independence' ought to have remembered that he was necessary to the cause for which he fought, and ought not to have so recklessly thrown himself into the jaws of death. At one dreadful moment he was almost cut off from his followers and surrounded by the enemy. 'In that instant,' says the narrator,

‘from thousands of breasts there rose a cry of terror; the Zouaves, the staff officers, the Bersaglieri, all with horror in their faces, threw themselves like a thunderbolt on the enemy; like lightning they encircled the king, and saved his precious life and liberty.’ ‘Are you afraid I shall throw you into the shade?’ he said, in reply to their remonstrances. ‘Do not fear; there is glory enough for all.’

The day was won, the king was safe, and the joy of the Sardinian army can be better imagined than described—a joy in which the Zouaves heartily shared, making the field ring with shouts of *Vive le Roi!* Henceforth he was their peculiar hero; that evening they elected him their captain, and carried to his headquarters the pieces of cannon taken from the enemy.

The king sent back the cannon with the following letter to Colonel de Chabron:—

From Headquarters, Torrione, June 1, 1859.

Monsieur le Colonel,—The emperor in placing at my orders the third regiment of Zouaves, has given me a precious proof of his friendship. I thought that I could not better welcome this choice troop than by furnishing an occasion to aid in a new exploit those who in the fields of battle in Africa and the Crimea have rendered so redoubtable the name of Zouaves.

The irresistible impetus with which your regiment, Monsieur le Colonel, rushed yesterday to the attack, excited all my admiration. To throw themselves

upon the enemy at the bayonet's point, and possess themselves of a battery, while braving the fire of the *mitraille*, was the affair only of some moments. You ought to be proud to command such soldiers, and they ought to be happy to obey a chief like you.

I appreciate highly the thought which induced the Zouaves to bring to my head-quarters the pieces of artillery taken from the Austrians, and I pray you to thank them for me. I hasten to send this fine trophy to his majesty the emperor, to whom I have already made known the incomparable bravery with which your regiment fought yesterday at Palestro, and sustained my extreme right.

I shall always be very glad to see the third regiment of Zouaves fight beside my soldiers, and gather new laurels on the fields of battle which await us.

Will you, Monsieur le Colonel, make known these sentiments to your Zouaves?

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

The Zouaves having elected the King of Sardinia to be their captain, the emperor said smiling, 'Now that you belong to my army I have a right to reprove you for your imprudence yesterday. If that happens again I will put you under arrest.'

On the evening of the 31st Victor Emmanuel addressed a proclamation to his own troops, and despatched 'the other good news' which in the morning he had boldly promised Cavour.

*To the Sardinian Army.*

Soldiers!—To-day a new and splendid feat of arms has been signalised by a new victory. The enemy assailed us vigorously in the positions of Palestro. They conveyed heavy forces against our right, in order to impede the conjunction of ours with the troops of Marshal Canrobert.

It was a supreme moment; our ranks were far inferior to the adversary; but there stood in front of the attacking party the valorous troop of the fourth division, led by General Cialdini, and the incomparable third regiment of Zouaves, who, working in conjunction with the Sardinian army, contributed powerfully to the victory. It was a murderous fight, but at the end the allied troops repulsed the enemy, having inflicted upon him serious losses, including a general and many officers. We have about 1,000 Austrian prisoners. Eight cannon were taken at the bayonet's point—five by the Zouaves, three by our men.

At the same time that the battle of Palestro was taking place, General Fanti, with equally happy success, repulsed with the troops of the second division another attack directed by the Austrians upon Confienza.

His majesty the emperor, on visiting the battle-field, expressed his heartfelt congratulations, and appreciates the immense advantage of this day.

Soldiers! Persevere in these your sublime efforts,

and I feel certain that heaven will crown the work so courageously initiated.

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

From Headquarters at Torrione, May 31, 1859.

This order of the day, in Victor Emmanuel's own style, gives briefly a fair idea of the day's doings, only his own exploits are necessarily omitted.

While recording the triumph of the Piedmontese army, it would be unjust to withhold the tribute of praise from those exiles who, before Garibaldi's volunteer army was organised, had abandoned home and country, and gone to aid their Sardinian brothers in their struggle for liberty. There were no braver nor more devoted men in the army than these poor 'foreigners,' as they were then called; and many touching anecdotes are told of how willingly they died, praying for their country, and blessing 'the champion of their liberty,' as he walked over the field, taking cognisance of his losses, and giving orders for the care of the wounded.

It must always be a melancholy moment to a general when, the excitement and exultation of victory passed, he begins to count the costs, and sees so many of his brave followers laid low; and Victor Emmanuel, whose emotional nature was quickly touched, felt depressed by the spectacle. In the course of his mournful walk he came to where a young Roman lay, with the life-blood slowly ebbing from his side. At the sight of the king his eye brightened, and he said to the companion who supported him,—

‘Raise my head; let me look at him again. My leader, my hero, my king!’

Victor Emmanuel approached, and the volunteer exclaimed, ‘God preserve you, saviour of Italy. For the sake of this blood, for the glory of your throne, for the memory of your martyred father, I conjure you to make our country free!’

The king, deeply moved, bent over the dying volunteer, placed his hand on his, and with tears in his eyes gave once more the oft-repeated promise to liberate Italy if life were spared to him.<sup>1</sup>

On June 3, the allied armies arrived at Novara, the painful memories of which were fast being obliterated by the exultation of the present successes. On the 4th the great and decisive battle of Magenta was fought and won by the allied armies, and placed Lombardy at the feet of the Sardinian king.<sup>2</sup>

Two days after this victory Victor Emmanuel received the deputation which came in the name of the whole population of the state to offer their fealty to him, and beg to be united to Piedmont. As a confirmation of the union, the king immediately appointed some noble Lombards to offices of state.

<sup>1</sup> Bersezio.

<sup>2</sup> There was a little incident of this battle which we recollect being reported by some newspaper correspondents at the time, though we have never met with it anywhere since, which is interesting and significant. Among the Austrian dead there was found a youth, ‘whose musket had never been loaded,’ and on him were papers declaring that he, a Venetian, had been forced to serve, but he never would fire on his countrymen, and only desired to be killed by them. The Italians took off the hated white uniform and buried him with their own dead, ‘that his spirit might have rest.’ This is the origin of Mrs. Browning’s poem *The Forced Recruit*.

On June 8, four days after the battle of Magenta, the allies made a triumphal entry into Milan, and went straight to the magnificent cathedral, to return thanks in a solemn service. While they were thus engaged came the news of another success gained by the French troops at Malegnano, so that the campaign was one unbroken series of victories from beginning to end ; and as for the allied armies, so also it was for the volunteers under Garibaldi, who, being a perfect master of irregular warfare, harassed the enemy in such a way as to contribute not a little to the successful issue of the campaign.

*Royal Proclamation.*

People of Lombardy!—The victory of the liberating army brings me among you. Your national rights restored, your votes will confirm your union with my kingdom, which is founded on the guarantees of a civilised life. The temporary form of government which I establish to-day is required by the necessity of war. When assured of independence, men's minds will acquire the coolness and strength necessary to prepare the foundation of a liberal and lasting *régime*.

The Subalpines have made, and still make, great sacrifices for the common country. Our army, which welcomes in its ranks many valiant volunteers of other Italian provinces, has already given splendid proofs of its courage, combating victoriously for the national cause. The Emperor of the French, our generous ally, worthy of the name and genius of



Napoleon, putting himself at the head of the heroic army of that great nation, wishes to *liberate Italy from the Alps to the Adriatic*. In a rivalry of sacrifices you will second these magnanimous proposals on the fields of battle, you will show yourselves worthy of the destinies to which Italy is now called after so many centuries of suffering.

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

June 9, 1859.

The Lombards welcomed back their dear exiles with frantic joy, and passionate demonstrations of gratitude to the liberator so long prayed for, who was now in very truth their king, for the Austrians, everywhere beaten, had retired beyond the Mincio into the Venetian provinces. It was in the Lombard capital, after so many brilliant feats on the part of both leaders, that Victor Emmanuel and Garibaldi first met.

The king had always felt interested in the strange romantic career of the poor fisherman's son, who had been described by the Papal and Bourbon adherents—trembling in '48 at the sight of the *Camicia rossa*—as a bloodthirsty anarchist, a communist, an antichrist, in fact; and whose story, divested of this warm colouring, was not such as to recommend him particularly to the favour of an hereditary monarch. He was a republican Italian, and a cosmopolitan defender of peoples' rights in every land. With those in authority he had earned a reputation somewhat like that of the Irishman who on landing in America asked, 'Is there any government established in this country? Because, if there is, I'm agin' it.'

Garibaldi had hitherto found himself pretty well *against* every government where he happened to sojourn : that was the fault of the governments, of course ; but nevertheless it made him be dreaded by order-loving people, who thought a little tyranny preferable to continual revolutions.

The daring courage, the childlike simplicity, the originality of this strange man, whose soul seemed cast in the mould of ancient days, won the admiration of a kindred spirit, singularly free from the prejudices of his class—one who could value a man for his own worth apart from all accessories of rank or position. It was flattering to a king like Victor, the voluntary homage of this wild republican ; and it was flattering to the great volunteer, the tone of brotherly equality with which the head of an ancient dynasty received him. The meeting between the two heroes at Milan was most cordial, full of mutual congratulations and expressions of esteem. The king fastened the gold medal for military valour on the breast of the valiant general, who was proud to receive it from his hands, not because he was a king, but because he was a patriot and a hero.

But Lombardy had not seen the last of that obnoxious individual popularly known as *lo Straniero*. It was not to be expected that a great military power, with vast resources at her command, would relinquish those rich provinces to her old hereditary foe without a desperate struggle. Hastily collecting troops in those provinces still subject to her sway, she returned to the combat with renewed vigour. So secretly, speedily, and

cleverly was the move executed, that the Austrian army was in front of the allies before they had dreamed of a renewal of the contest. But both French and Sardes were equal to the occasion ; and on June 24 was fought the double battle of Solferino and San Martino, which was the crowning glory of this glorious campaign. The French call this day ' Solferino,' but the Italians like to speak of it as ' San Martino,' that being the name of the hill from which the Sardinian king and his soldiers dislodged the Austrians, after a prolonged and bloody combat, which lasted from early morning till seven o'clock in the evening. During all this time the king was in the saddle, directing the movements of the troops over the extensive battle ground, and with four divisions under his immediate command he opposed a greatly superior force, fighting his way from Lonato to San Martino to the aid of General Mollard, whom he knew to be hard pressed by the enemy in that position. ' By his able dispositions,' writes a Frenchman, ' by the magic effect of his presence, by the impetus with which he knows so well how to inspire his soldiers, his troops were able to accomplish prodigies, displaying an inexhaustible tenacity in resistance as well as in attack.'

The Austrians under the command of General Benedek encountered General Mollard at San Martino early in the morning. The Italian general, knowing the importance of this position, was resolved to hold it at any cost.

San Martino is a high hill, the precipitous sides of which were protected by little forts, and it commanded

all the roads between Solferino and the Lago di Garda. After a hard struggle, the Austrians, being superior in numbers, forced the Piedmontese from the height and pursued them into the plain. The king having in the meantime sent them succours, and returned to the combat, climbed the hill of San Martino once more, under a furious fire, and drove the enemy from the position at the point of the bayonet.

But in that attack the Piedmontese ranks had been terribly thinned, and again the enemy, with an overwhelming effort, forced them from the height. Meantime an officer from the king arrived to say he was hastening to their assistance. 'Our allies are winning a great battle at Solferino; it is the wish of the king that his soldiers should win one at San Martino,' said the aide-de-camp. 'Say to the king that his orders shall be executed,' was the proud reply of General Mollard.

Before noon Victor Emmanuel had sent a message to the French commander, Marshal Hilliers, 'who was winning a great victory at Solferino.' The mountain sides were so bestrewed with wounded that the king's messenger had to lead his horse to avoid trampling on them. He found the French commander in possession of the field and the enemy retreating. The marshal spoke slightly of the Piedmontese slowness in advancing, and said,—

*'Vous n'avez pas encore appris à marcher comme nous.'* The Sardinian replied that some of their troops had been called to support the emperor in the plain, and that those that remained under the king's command

had a vastly superior force to combat. The marshal looked at his watch and said, 'It is one o'clock. I hope that by evening your army will have arrived at Pozzolengo.'

Pozzolengo was two miles from Lonato ; and before reaching it, it was necessary for Victor Emmanuel to overpower the forces that opposed him there, and then go to the defence of San Martino, which was the all-important post that must be conquered finally before proceeding to Pozzolengo. When his aide-de-camp returned and told him what the French general had said, he was somewhat piqued. It was not quite just to reproach him with 'slowness' under the circumstances. He despatched a messenger to La Marmora—about three-quarters of an hour's ride—saying, 'Go immediately to La Marmora, tell him that I order him to take the command of Durando's division, with half of Fanti's, and to hasten to San Martino ; say at the same time that I am sending orders to Mollard and Cucchiari to attack it in front at half-past four, while La Marmora at the same time will attack it at the side. San Martino *shall* be ours—we will go to Pozzolengo this evening !'

The orders of the king were punctually obeyed ; against the appointed hour he himself was there with his own followers ready to lead the attack at the other side.

'My sons,' said he, 'we must take San Martino, or the enemy will make us do San Martino.' San Martino was the day on which the people of that country always removed from one house to another ; hence removing

came to be called *doing San Martino*. The king's bad pun was received with loud cheers. They took San Martino after a desperate resistance, and Victor Emmanuel, according to his promise, arrived at Pozzolengo late in the evening.

When Marshal Hilliers was complimenting the king on his day's work, he took care to let him know that he had heard his remark about the slowness of his 'march.'

Victor Emmanuel did not wait to repose himself before expressing his warm thanks to the army which had so nobly sustained him throughout the day.

### *Royal Proclamation.*

Soldiers!—In two months of war from the invasion of the banks of the Sesia and of the Po, you have advanced from victory to victory to the banks of the Garda and the Minçio. In the glorious path you have traversed in company with our generous and powerful ally, you have given the most splendid proofs of discipline and heroism.

The nation is proud of you. Italy counts among your ranks her best sons, applauds your merit, and from your actions draws happy auguries for her future destinies. To-day you have won another great victory; you have poured out your blood unsparingly, conquering an enemy great in numbers and protected by the strongest positions.

In the day, now famous, of Solferino and San Martino, you fought from the break of day till the

close of night, led on by your intrepid officers, and repulsed the repeated assaults of the enemy, forcing him to re-cross the Mincio ; leaving in your hands, on the field of battle, men, arms, and cannon. On their part, the French army obtained equally great results, equal glory, giving new proof of that incomparable valour that for centuries has called the admiration of the world on their heroic ranks.

Victory has cost us heavy sacrifices ; but by that noble blood so freely shed for the holiest of causes Europe will learn that Italy is worthy of a seat amongst the nations.

Soldiers!—In the preceding battles I had often occasion to signalise the names of many of you in the order of the day. Now I bring to the order of the day the whole army.

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

From Headquarters, Rivoltella, June 25, 1859.

This was the last battle of the campaign, which was strangely and unaccountably cut short by the emperor's resolution to advance no further than the Mincio. Forgetful of his promise to liberate Italy 'from the Alps to the Adriatic,' he left poor Venice still in the clutches of the Austrian eagle, and led his army homewards.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE PEACE OF VILLAFRANCA, A.D. 1859.

IT was not to be expected that the inhabitants of the states of Central Italy could sit still while the Sardinians and Lombards were carrying on a successful war for the expulsion of the foreigner. Tuscany rose against the grand duke, demanding a constitution. He ordered the troops to fire on the people from the battlements of the Pitti Palace. The officers replied that they dare not give such an order, as the men would refuse to shoot down their fellow-citizens. 'And what will become of us?' asked the crown prince, indignantly.

'Grant the constitution,' was the ready answer of the ministers. The grand duke asked time to deliberate, retired to a villa, and from thence took his departure, escorted to the frontier by the carabinieri, to protect him from insult—an unnecessary precaution; the courteous Tuscans saluted him respectfully as he passed, too glad to be rid of him without bloodshed. He hoped to return, as in 1849, with an Austrian army at his back—but this time he miscalculated. The Duke of Modena and the Duchess of Parma fled precipitately with the duchies rose also the Pontifical States—the



provinces of Bologna, Ferrara, Umbria, Perugia, the Marches—all joined in the national cry of *Viva l'Italia! Viva Vittorio Emanuele!* In fact, all the inhabitants of Central Italy loudly proclaimed their determination to be free—and none more resolutely than the subjects of Pio Nono. After the battle of Magenta deputations from the provinces arrived in Turin, entreating a union with North Italy. Cavour, not being able to give any answer that would satisfy the deputations, sent them to the camp to speak to the king himself. They arrived the day before Solferino, and were immediately admitted to the royal presence. The Piedmontese head-quarters were at Calcinate, where the king had taken up his abode in a poor little country house. They found him standing by the window, with one hand on his sword-hilt, and the other resting on a writing table, where he had just laid a letter from the Holy Father, more disagreeable than usual, as was natural under the circumstances.

The Marquis Pepoli read the address from the provinces, and then added some words of his own earnestly urging the king not to leave them without a government, and begging him to accept provisionally a military dictatorship. Victor listened in thoughtful silence, and then told the gentlemen to thank the populations they represented; begged them still to put confidence in him, even though he could not now accept their offer; protested that he was ready to surrender himself utterly for the accomplishment of the great end they had in view; Italy should be 'made' beyond all

doubt, but it was necessary to wait. He was afraid 'diplomacy' would throw serious obstacles in the way of a dictatorship.

'The Pope gives me much annoyance, and I cannot do as I should like,' he added, showing the letter he had lately received. He then directed them to lay the case before the French Emperor; and they received from him the advice to arm themselves 'to the teeth,' and wait what might turn up. Finally, Cavour was summoned to the camp. Something must be done immediately; the papal troops had entered the town of Perugia, overcome the citizens with great slaughter, and committed disgraceful atrocities. The other insurgent cities wanted the protection of some sort of governing body, while putting themselves in a state of defence. Cavour's advice was not to assume the title of Dictator nor Protector, but simply to send royal commissioners to Bologna with the sole object of maintaining order, and organising military forces in the surrounding provinces. Governors in the king's name had been sent to the principalities of Tuscany, Parma, and Modena; but dealing with the papal territories was a more delicate matter. Victor Emmanuel was already under the censures of the church, and he was now threatened with excommunication in its extremest rigour. The governor chosen for the Bolognese province was Pio Nono's old favourite, Massimo Azeglio. 'Am I to go to Bologna to do the anti-Pope?' said he, smiling, when he received the king's command. On the very day that it was officially announced that the commissioner was about to

take temporary charge of the Romagnian provinces, the Pope's allocution arrived, breathing the fiercest anathemas against the king and his government if they carried out their impious intentions. 'Atrocious deeds like those of Perugia, and threats like those of the allocution,' wrote Sir James Hudson, 'ought to persuade the sincerest Catholics of the approaching fall of the temporal power of the Popes.'

Ferdinand II. of Naples had died on May 22, a few minutes after receiving the news of the battle of Montebello. The old tyrant's last moments were embittered by the victory of 'the Sardo,' whom he had always hated, as representing the principles of religious and civil freedom, which his soul abhorred. At the beginning of the struggle with Austria the Savoy family had no designs on the other kingdoms of Italy. Both Charles Albert and Victor Emmanuel had again and again offered to form a federation with the other Italian princes for the expulsion of the foreigner,—in which case they would have contented themselves with the annexation of Lombardy and Venetia to the kingdom of Sardinia. But the other princes steadfastly refusing this alliance, breaking their promises of granting reforms, and above all maintaining their position altogether by the aid of Austria, and acting under her control,—they had gradually come to see no way for the redemption of Italy but a complete overthrow of the principalities. Personal and dynastic ambition was doubtless blended with patriotic fervour in the soul of Victor Emmanuel; but it was an ambition which the Italians themselves excited and

commended to the last degree. The crown of Sicily had been offered in 1848 to the younger son of Charles Albert and refused, after which many conciliatory embassies from Sardinia had been sent to Ferdinand, as also to Leopold and Pius, entreating them to reform their respective governments,—but all in vain.

Now that the old king was dead, Victor Emmanuel, with that generosity which was his most striking characteristic, resolved to bury all the offences and insults of the past ten years in his grave, and offer his frank and cordial alliance to the son of his old enemy. He did not do this without the concurrence of Poerio, and the other noble Neapolitan exiles, who, like him, thought it a duty, for the sake of peace, to smother personal animosity. But the Bourbon pride and obstinacy, like that of the Stuarts, blinded them to their danger. Francis II. declined the honour of an alliance with the liberator of Italy,—unfortunately for himself, but happily for his country.

The Emperor Napoleon having promised and proclaimed that Italy should be free from the Alps to the Adriatic, and having had one unbroken series of victories from the Sesia to the Mincio, it was natural to expect that he would carry his conquering arms into Venetia, and finish the work he had undertaken. But all of a sudden this unaccountable man was taken with a panic—some say it was the spectacle of Solferino the day after the battle which struck him with horror; others that the empress had informed him of the growing jealousy of Prussia after every victory which threatened

to have serious consequences, and of the displeasure of the Russian government at the expulsion of the dukes, who had taken refuge in the dominions of the Czar and asked his protection. Be this as it may, he was resolved to turn back from the enterprise. And he demanded an armistice from the Austrians, as if he had been the beaten party: Victor Emmanuel, it may be imagined, did all that man could do to dissuade him from throwing away the fruits of their united victories. It was all in vain; the man of fate would move no further, and Victor, with a heavy heart, resigned himself. '*Povera Italia!*' he exclaimed mournfully, then added, 'Whatever shall be your majesty's decision, I shall always feel grateful for what you have done for Italian independence, and you may count on me as a friend.'

The Marshal Vaillant ventured to remonstrate with the emperor. 'Sire,' said he, 'an armistice means peace.'

'That is nothing to you,' was the polite rejoinder.

'Sire,' said the undaunted marshal, 'you have promised to make Italy free from the Alps to the Adriatic.

*'Je vous répète, maréchal, cela ne vous regarde pas.'*

The armistice was concluded, and the preliminaries of peace arranged, July 8. The Emperors of Austria and France had settled that the banished princes were to be restored without violence, that Piedmont was to be left in possession of Lombardy, and that the Pope was to be persuaded to make some reforms in his government.

The grief of the disputed provinces, when they heard of the proposed peace, was indescribable. No calamity

that war had brought could cause such bitter anguish as the Italians, especially the Romagnuoli, then felt. They had borne oppression so long, they had suffered so much for their sympathy with their northern countrymen, they had contributed their money and their blood to the national cause, and now, in the moment of victory, they were abandoned to the tender mercies of their ecclesiastical rulers,—after having laid their homage at the foot of the throne of Sardinia. It was a cruel case, and Victor Emmanuel would have sacrificed some years of his life to be able to fulfil their wishes. But he had no choice ; to make war alone and unaided would have been madness.

The news of the armistice struck Cavour like a thunderbolt. He did not see things from the emperor's point of view, and peace under such circumstances seemed like insanity or treachery. It would be difficult to imagine how he felt without knowing how entirely he had made every other consideration in life subservient to the cause which now seemed wantonly ruined.

The world [says his biographer] will ever remain ignorant of the immense labour and fatigue of mind that Count Cavour passed through in those days [preceding the war]. But history in its justice will relate how in the midst of such a boiling over of violent passions, of mortal hatreds, of generous excitement, of storms and worries indescribable, he remained imperturbably serene, calculating the current events, knowing how with extraordinary acuteness of mind to master men

and things, to hit the best opportunity for action ; and though he held in the hollow of his hand the fomenting revolution, never did he once depart from the course of patient moderation, which alone could save the Italian question from becoming lacerated by the claws of the Austrian eagle, in that last and most difficult period of the negotiations.

But once the note was sounded for bold and strong measures, the patriotic spirit of Camillo Cavour shared largely the enthusiasm, the just resentment, of his nation. Let us look at his work. At one and the same time he was President of the Council, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of War, Minister of the Interior. He had a bed placed in the apartments of the War Ministry, and during the nights he walked in his dressing-gown from one department to another, giving directions as to police regulations, diplomatic correspondence and preparations for war, inflaming everyone by his example of laboriousness and patriotism.<sup>1</sup>

His herculean labours did not affect his health, for he had great courage, hope, and patience to support him ; and as the news of each successive victory reached Turin, hope became certainty. What his sensations were when the news of the armistice reached him may be imagined. The heavy responsibility of having urged the king and nation into a fruitless war weighed upon him, mingled with the fierce indignation

<sup>1</sup> Bianchi.

which he felt towards his false ally, for such he considered Napoleon. He set out for the camp, hoping, as the preliminaries were not yet signed, he might still stop the proceedings. He had an interview with the emperor which proved ineffectual in changing his resolution. His destiny had carried him to the Mincio, but it refused to move further in an easterly or southerly direction.

Cavour's passions, though habitually concealed under an imperturbable serenity and *sang froid*, were profound and strong, and they were now stirred to their depths. For the first and only time in his public career he allowed them to master him, completely obscuring his usually clear, unerring judgment. He had generally acted as a check on the fiery impulsiveness of the king, but now they seemed to have changed characters.

Victor Emmanuel, calm and resigned, was listening to a French officer reading the preliminaries of the treaty in the presence of La Marmora and three other witnesses, when the count entered. White with anger, which he made no effort to suppress, he stormed against the emperor, and upbraided the king with his complaisance. He said he ought to refuse to accept Lombardy, and withdraw the Piedmontese army into his own proper territory. The king argued against this extreme measure, saying he was pledged to the Lombards, and it would be unjust and unfaithful to abandon them. But Cavour would not admit of any compromise. The interview was long and painful; and though the king



maintained a dignified calm throughout, he was deeply offended.

The vehemence of Count Cavour's language attested the excitement of his soul [says Massari]. All the more painful and keenly felt was the struggle between the king and minister, because both desired intensely to arrive at the same end, to secure the destinies of Italy. General La Marmora, always ready for every good work, conquered his own grief, and tried to calm the generous ire of Count Cavour, and put an end to the king's distress.

The count returned to Turin almost broken-hearted. 'In the space of three days he had grown older by many years.' The day the peace was signed at Villafranca Cavour sent in his resignation, and all his colleagues with him. Paleocapa, the blind Venetian minister, wept. 'My blindness is no longer a grief to me, since I can no longer hope to revisit my beloved Venice,' he said.

It must not be supposed that the king did not feel as much as his ministers the sudden termination of the war; but for once he seemed to see a little farther into the future than the astute Cavour, and did not utterly despair. His trouble was aggravated by his quarrel with the count, which threw on him the whole responsibility of accepting a very unpopular peace.

The treaty was signed July 12, Victor Emmanuel, by the advice of the emperor, putting in these words: '*J'accepte pour ce qui me concerne,*' meaning that he

accepted Lombardy, but had nothing to say to the question of the duchies or the Romagna, which left him free for future action. He issued a farewell address to the Lombards, couched in the affectionate terms of a sovereign to his own subjects, renewing his pledge to protect them, and telling them to confide in their king.

Victor Emmanuel entered the Subalpine capital in company with the Emperor Napoleon. The joy of seeing their beloved king safely returned was damped by the depression of spirits consequent on the peace. Yet a certain warmth of greeting to the foreign sovereign gratitude demanded. He had done much for them, and doubtless had his reasons for not doing more. The king had accepted the peace, and he would not have done it if it could have been avoided. The Turin people, reasoning thus, behaved very well and decorously on the occasion of the emperor's visit.

The day after his return the king received Sir James Hudson in a private audience. He had always regarded him as a personal friend, and it was a relief to open his mind, and confide all his troubles to such an intelligent sympathiser as the English minister, who had shown that he had the interests of Italy at heart.

The Cavour ministry only held office till their successors were appointed. Their chief was nursing his wrath to keep it warm; and the king was full of indignation against him for the disrespectful manner in which he had deported himself in their last interview, when in wanting to force his rash counsels upon him he had

forgotten what was due to his personal dignity. But without Cavour, Victor Emmanuel felt deprived of his right arm. He had some difficulty in forming a new ministry, but finally Signor Ratazzi undertook the conduct of affairs, with the aid of Generals La Marmora and Dabormida, all honourable men and true, but the three of them could not make one Cavour.

The new ministry began by a timid retrograde movement. Orders were issued to all the royal commissioners governing the insurgent provinces of Central Italy to leave their posts and return to Turin.

‘But these patriots understood,’ says Signor Ghiron, ‘that it would be grateful to the king to disobey these orders, and that it would expose the country to the gravest perils to abandon them,’ so they remained.

Cavour never would have put his government in such a position as to issue orders which ought to be disobeyed. Massimo Azeglio, who was at Bologna with 11,000 men under his command, to keep the peace of the surrounding provinces, positively refused to stir.

‘I thought,’ he wrote to his wife, ‘that the king would not wish to dishonour himself and me by leaving those provinces in a state of anarchy, and I disobeyed. Instead of moving the troops to Turin, I sent 9000 to the frontier of Romagna to defend the people who had been confided to me from the Swiss of Perugia. I invested my powers in Colonel Fallicon, my head staff officer, and I left all at their posts, the government in full authority ; so there has been no disorder, and I came on the fifth day to Turin to tell the king to put me under a council

of war. The king said I had done rightly, and that there must have been some mistake in the order.'

The Roman legations and the duchies, when they heard of the peace, sent deputations to Turin ; the king received them kindly, and tried to soothe their excited feelings by renewed promises of future help.

'What do they think of me in Tuscany ?' he asked of the secretary of the provisional government in Florence.

'We confide always in the loyal protection of your majesty.'

'I am glad of it,' he replied. 'I could not have any peace if I thought you could doubt me for a moment, or imagine that I, for my own interests, had abandoned the brave people who had put their trust in me.'

The Marquis Pepoli, who had been the head of the deputation from the Emilian provinces, to pray for annexation with North Italy, immediately on hearing of the peace hastened to Turin and asked an audience of the king. The particulars of that interview the marquis himself related to a mournful assembly in Bologna, January 23, 1878.

The Peace of Villafranca struck us all with horror. We lost every hope, for we feared a fresh intervention, and we had neither soldiers nor money to offer any efficacious opposition to the violence of the foreigner. It was then that the provisional government sent me to Turin to speak directly to the king. In fact, as soon as I arrived in that city, Victor Emmanuel granted

me an audience. I explained frankly, without reticence, our doubts, our fears, our urgent needs.

The king replied benignly, 'You have not the faith that saves. Why do you doubt me? Do you believe that I would have put my signature to the Peace of Villafranca without a formal promise that any fresh intervention would not be allowed?'

Seeing that I was not yet quite easy, he added, —

'If after my words the Bolognese still doubt, tell them, in my name, that if the Austrians should again invade the sacred soil of *la Patria*, I will abdicate like my father, and come to fight in the ranks of the Romagnuoli volunteers.'

'I believe your majesty's words,' I broke forth; 'but how shall we be able to provide for our wants, without money and without credit?'

'My government cannot come to your aid, for the diplomatic reasons which you know too well,' said the king. 'The House of Savoy is poor, therefore I cannot offer you the material aid you require. One thing only can I give—my signature. With that, try to provide necessaries, and arm yourselves for the day of battle.'

So saying, he wrote on a sheet of paper and handed it to me, with a kind look. I bathed the august hand with tears; and if I lived for a hundred years, never can I forget, as an Italian, as a citizen, that most noble act.

The Lombards at this time, to show their devotion to

their new sovereign, celebrated the tenth anniversary of the death of the late King Charles Albert by a religious service in his honour held in the cathedral of Milan. His grateful son wrote to the podestà as follows :—

My dear Count Belgioso.—The testimony of pious mourning offered by the people of Milan, July 28, to the memory of my father's great soul, moved my heart deeply. The Milanese associating themselves thus spontaneously with the domestic mourning of their king, shows that the bond that unites them to me is a bond of love, and gives me deep satisfaction. Their honouring in this unusual way the memory of Charles Albert, signifies that years and changing circumstances have not diminished their reverence and gratitude to the initiator of their independence, and in the name of Italy I thank them.

Although I had no need of any fresh proof of the affection and loyalty of my Milanese, it was at the same time so consoling to me, that I feel the need of showing them how I have understood them. The honourable podestà, by making himself interpreter of my sentiments with his fellow-citizens, will fulfil one of my dearest wishes.

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

Turin, July 31, 1859.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE VOTE OF THE ITALIAN PEOPLE. A.D. 1859.

CAVOUR's wrath calmed down after a time, and he began to see things in a clearer light ; but he was still resolved to remain in retirement. In the autumn he wrote to a friend as follows :—

I am full of faith in the future triumph of the cause for which I have struggled so long, and to it I am always ready to consecrate what life and strength I still possess ; but I am fully persuaded that my participation in politics at this moment would be damaging to my country. Her destinies have been put back again into the hands of diplomacy. Now I am in bad odour with the diplomatists ; my resignation is very grateful to them, and its effect will be such as to render them more favourable to the unhappy populations of Central Italy.

In August the king visited Lombardy privately ; the final treaty of peace not being yet signed, it would not have been good taste to do so officially. During this visit to Milan he expressed a desire to see Manzoni, and was told that he was ailing. Then Victor declared he

would go to see him in his own home, but Manzoni would not permit this, and hastened to pay his respects to the king as soon as he was able. Victor Emmanuel received the author of *I Promessi Sposi* with such marks of regard and profound respect as quite overwhelmed the modest poet. He was agreeably surprised to find the king, who thought and spoke either in Piedmontese or French, express himself so well in Tuscan ; and found him more cultivated and appreciative than he had expected. Here is the judgment of the gifted and pious Lombard on his new sovereign :—

I see in the character of the king the intervention of Providence. He is exactly the sovereign that circumstances require to accomplish the resurrection of Italy. He has rectitude, courage, incorruptible honesty, and disinterestedness : he seeks not glory or fortune for himself, but for his country. He is so simple, never caring to appear great, that he does not meet the admiration of those who seek to find in princes and heroes theatrical actions and grandiloquent words. He is natural because he is true, and this makes his enemies say that he is wanting in regal majesty. To found Italian unity he has risked his throne and his life.

We have heard some English persons criticise Victor Emmanuel's manners just in the way Manzoni describes ; but 'to found Italian unity,' they should remember, something more was needed than a drawing-room exquisite ; and there are a great many elegant gentlemen



who would 'look' the character of king as far as state ceremonies were concerned much better than he, but who would have cut a poor figure under circumstances in which he made a brilliant one. The Italians might well overlook the defects of their unconventional sovereign, who knew how so well to defend their rights and his own dignity when occasion required.

The Peace of Villafranca was referred to a conference held at Zurich for formal settlement. It began its sittings early in August and lasted till November. Great difficulties arose on the question as to what was to be done with the dispossessed princes. The Emperor of France had promised the King of Sardinia that no foreign intervention should take place. How then were they to be restored? The provinces were in arms, protesting vehemently against the return of their former rulers, declaring their right to decide their own destinies, and persisting in offering the sovereignty to Victor Emmanuel. It was not to be expected that *he* would take any part in the restoration of the banished dukes.

'The negotiators of the Peace of Villafranca,' says Massari, 'seemed to think that they had only to declare that Leopold of Lorraine should go to Florence, Francis D'Este to Modena, the Duchess de Bourbon to Parma, and the Pope's legates to Bologna, Ferrara, Forli, and Ravenna. But the inhabitants had quite different views on the subject.'

Baron Ricasoli in Florence, and the famous Farini (whose *Stato Romano* we have several times referred to) in Modena, took the lead in maintaining the liberty they

had won. An Assembly was convoked with representations of all the provinces ; and in this general Parliament, which was conducted with the utmost order and moderation, it was resolved that they should be citizens of the kingdom of Italy, subjects of Victor Emmanuel.

Meantime, while the inhabitants of Central Italy were sending deputations to Turin, and declaring loudly in their assemblies that they would have no other sovereign than the hero of San Martino, the Austrian rulers and the dispossessed princes were making a fearful outcry about the usurpations of the Sardinian king, and trying every art to detach the French emperor from his alliance. In fact, Napoleon was worked upon so strongly that he sent envoys to the provisional governments of the duchies to stop any further demonstrations in favour of Victor Emmanuel, and to himself he sent a special ambassador, the Count de Reiset, for whom he knew the king had a great esteem, to persuade him not to receive the offer of the dominions in question.

Victor explained frankly to the count that he did not regard the matter merely as a question of enlarging his dominions. It was the spontaneous desire of the populations of those provinces that they should be united to his kingdom, and though he felt for the embarrassment of his ally, he could not bring himself to disappoint the confidence that those peoples had reposed in him after the warm sympathy they had shown for him and his government, and the piteous tenacity with which they now clung to him for protection.

In fact, the king gave the Florence deputation, which

arrived on September 3, a very cordial reception. The Count Ugolino della Gherardesca read the address offering the throne of Tuscany to Victor Emmanuel in the name of all its inhabitants.

*Victor Emmanuel's reply to the Tuscans.*

I am profoundly grateful for the vote of the Tuscan Assembly of which you are the interpreters to me. I thank you for it, and with me my people thank you.

I receive this vote as a solemn manifestation of the will of the Tuscan people that, in putting an end, in that land which is the mother of modern civilisation, to the last vestiges of foreign domination, they desire to contribute to the construction of a strong realm, and place Italy in a position to be able to provide for her own independence.

The Tuscan Assembly has of course understood that all Italy is involved in her fate, and that the fulfilment of this vote cannot be effected but by means of the negotiations which are taking place for the re-arrangement of Italian affairs.

Strengthened by the right your vote confers on me, I will second your desire, and uphold the cause of Tuscany before those powers in which the Assembly, with much good sense, places its hopes; and above all with the generous Emperor of the French, who has done so much for the Italian nation. Europe will not refuse, I hope, to exercise towards Tuscany that work of reparation which under less favourable

circumstances she has exercised for Greece, Belgium, and the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia.

Wonderful example of temperateness and concord, gentlemen, your noble country has given in these times. And to those virtues which the school of misfortune has already taught to Italy, you will add, I feel sure, that which overcomes the most arduous trials and assures the triumph of just enterprises—perseverance.

There was a court dinner in the evening. The king was most affable to all the representatives of the Tuscan cities, particularly to Count Ugolino della Gherardesca, who sat at his right, and with whom he jested about his classic name, saying he thought all the family of Ugolino had perished in the tower of Pisa.

Close upon the Tuscan deputation came those of Modena and Parma together, with equally warm protestations of devotion, and were received with the same honours.

The king replied in similar terms to those he had used to the Tuscans, but in the last two paragraphs he expressed himself somewhat more decidedly as to the *right* of the Italian people to choose their own government.

Confide, gentlemen, in the sense of Europe; confide in the efficacious protection of the Emperor Napoleon, who led the legions of France to fight victoriously for the redemption of Italy. Europe has already recognised the right of other peoples to pro-

vide for their own safety by the choice of a government which will guard their liberty and independence. She will not be, I hope, less just nor less generous to these Italian provinces, who ask nothing more than to be governed by a moderate national monarchy; and which are already united by geographical position, common race and interests.

I do not say to you, persevere and unite in this undertaking. The vote which your Assemblies have renewed, and the valiant soldiers whom in the day of battle you sent in such numbers to my standard, render testimony that the peoples of Modena and Parma have a strength of purpose and virtue which they have proved and sealed with their blood. I may well congratulate you on the order and moderation of which you have given such a splendid example. You also have demonstrated to Europe that the Italians know how to govern themselves, and that they are worthy to be citizens of a free nation.

Among the Parma deputation was the musical composer Verdi, who has always been distinguished for his patriotic sentiments.

The last deputation, and the most difficult to deal with, was that from the provinces of Romagna. The king felt no less kindly and gratefully to those brave people, who had suffered as much if not more than the others for his sake, or the sake of the principle he represented. But unhappily they were the subjects of the Pontiff; and there was great risk at such a critical

moment of rousing religious susceptibilities and bringing down upon him the pious indignation of the Catholic powers. He was already under the censures of the Church because he had taken upon himself to direct the provisional governments of the insurgent cities. The king received the deputation from the Pontifical States at the royal villa of Monza, near Milan.

*Victor Emmanuel's reply to the Romagnuoli.*

I am grateful for the votes of the people of the Romagna, of which you, gentlemen, are the interpreters to me. As a Catholic prince I shall preserve in every event a profound and unalterable reverence towards the Supreme Head of the Church. As an Italian prince I must remember that, Europe having recognised and proclaimed that the conditions of your country require prompt and efficacious remedies, I have contracted towards it solemn obligations.

Meantime I receive your votes, and strong in the right they confer upon me, I will maintain your cause before the great powers. Confide in their sense and justice, confide in the generous sentiments of the emperor, who will try to complete the great work of reparation to which he has already placed his hand so powerfully, and which has assured him the gratitude of all Italy.

The moderation which has guided your movements in the most painful moments of uncertainty, shows undoubtedly that the mere hope of national

rule in the Romagna is enough to quiet civil discords.

Accept my thanks, gentlemen. When in the days of the national struggle you sent me numerous volunteers, who displayed so much valour under my banner, you understood that Piedmont did not fight for herself alone, but for our common country. Now preserving unanimity of will and maintaining public order, you will fulfil that duty which is most grateful to my heart, and that which will best assure your future. Europe will understand that it is a common duty, as it is a common interest, to close the era of Italian insurrections by procuring the accomplishment of your legitimate desires.

In spite of what Victor Emmanuel considered his prudent and temperate bearing, great indignation was felt by the Catholic powers, and the Emperor of the French was attacked for encouraging this ambitious usurper in his iniquitous and sacrilegious designs. And those whose sympathies were not Catholic preferred the conservation of the established order of things, even when the *régime* was acknowledged to be bad, lest a worse might be the result of any change. One nation there was which understood and appreciated the grand design of the Sardinian king, and befriended him as far as moral support went in the councils of Europe. And though the British Government never allowed its sympathy for liberty to carry it into a war, a great number of Englishmen felt strongly for Italy in her struggle

for freedom and civilisation, and subscribed largely for the aid of the volunteers.

Baron Ricasoli of Florence, and Signor Farini of Modena, as heads of the provisional governments, sent envoys to all the courts of Europe to enlighten public opinion on the Italian question, and contradict the false reports set afloat by the dispossessed princes and the papal party. The most perfect order reigned in the duchies and in the Legations; the inhabitants felt that they were on their trial before Europe, and they wished to show that they were fit to be citizens of a free nation. Ricasoli was made Dictator of Tuscany, and Farini of the Emilian Provinces, and under the government of these able and patriotic men matters went on so as to leave nothing to be desired. The world stood in admiration and amaze at the spectacle of such perfect self-control, order, and tranquillity as Central Italy presented under circumstances calculated to excite all the fiercest passions of an ill-educated, hot-blooded, impulsive race. No act of revenge, no insults nor outrages towards priests or agents of the late governments stained the record of that bloodless revolution during the six months of suspense in which their destiny hung in the balance. It is one of the brightest pages in the reign of Victor Emmanuel, and reflects more honour on the Italian nation than the glorious victories of which they are so justly proud.

The suspense was too much for Garibaldi: patient waiting was not the *forte* of the gallant volunteer. He had been actively organising troops all this time, and



now he prepared to make a descent upon the provinces on the Adriatic coast called the Marches. It was one of those critical moments when one false move would ruin the whole cause. The Sardinian Government was much alarmed, and counselled the king to summon Garibaldi to his presence and lay his commands upon him not to proceed with his design. The general obeyed the royal summons, and in a private interview Victor explained his policy and the strong reasons he had for wishing the papal frontier to be respected while awaiting the judgment of Europe.

Garibaldi was no respecter of kings, as such, but he loved and admired the man who had made himself champion of Italian independence. At this time Victor Emmanuel's influence over the gallant volunteer was greater than that of the republican party, and he laid down his arms at his request. Pity he was not always so amenable!

Time passed on, and the Treaty of Villafranca was put into effect by the king's government—that part of it at least ‘which concerned him;’ but the fate of Central Italy still hung in a state of painful suspense. It was a difficult position for the provisional governments, having for many months to hold in check the passions of a people excited to the last degree between hope and despair. But Victor Emmanuel had said, ‘Be patient, be moderate; confide in the justice of Europe and my devotion to your cause;’ and so they waited. Meantime they desired as an additional tie to the House of Savoy, that they might have the king's

cousin, the Prince of Carignano, as viceroy. Victor Emmanuel could not bring himself to refuse the request, though it was thought imprudent to grant it.

In the month of November the idea of a European Congress, which had been for some time ventilated, became a decided thing, and all the powers began to nominate their plenipotentiaries. When the question came up as to who was to represent Sardinia, there was but one opinion on the subject. Camillo Cavour was the name that rose to every tongue, not only in Italy but in every country that had a regard for the interests of that unfortunate peninsula. Lord John Russell declared that a Congress to consider the Italian question would be impossible without Cavour.

The count was beginning to get tired of his inactive life, and he was quite willing to take up the burden which in a moment of inconsiderate passion he had cast off; but the king was not so willing to recall him to office. He was deeply offended by the way in which he had deported himself in their last interview, and he could not at once get over it. But after a brief struggle, his nobler self conquered; he put aside personal resentment so far as to allow Count Cavour to be nominated first Sardinian plenipotentiary for the Congress; and with him was associated Cavaliere Luigi Desambrois, then minister at Paris.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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